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The Quiet Hour

WILLIAM ADAMS BROWN

The Quiet Hour

EXPERIENCES OF FELLOWSHIP IN WORSHIP

Recorded by
William Adams Brown

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TO THOSE WHO
DEAFENED BY LIFE'S MANY NOISES
WOULD TURN ASIDE
TO LISTEN TO
THE STILL SMALL VOICE

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WITH JESUS IN THE SCHOOL OF PRAYER

A Prayer for Peace

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FOREWORD

THESE prayers have been tested by use. They are the outcome of an experiment in social worship which has been carried on in the Chapel of the Union Theological Seminary during two successive years. In the critical atmosphere of the study and the class-room, it is not easy to keep alive the spirit of prayer. The words of Scripture which in ages past have brought comfort and inspiration to the human spirit have been "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," and for many no longer call forth spontaneously reverence and adoration. Even into our hours of worship we bring with us our perplexities and our uncertainties; our questionings and our doubts. The prayers that follow are the record of an attempt to recover again for a company of students the detachment and receptivity which make it possible to realize the presence of God.

The prayers are grouped about familiar passages of Scripture, each chosen because it expresses some permanent human aspiration or speaks to some recurrent human need. The reading of this passage without comment was followed by a period of silence in which each worshiper was given opportunity to meditate in private upon such aspect

of the central thought as proved most fitted to his personal need. Then, as an aid to concentration and sympathy, phrases or sentences were suggested for further meditation, each period being concluded with a brief collect through which the common aspiration was expressed.

Some of those who shared in the experiment have encouraged me to hope that the record of an experience which they have found helpful in giving reality to their own devotion may prove suggestive to others, who, like themselves, feel the need of quickening and purifying the inner life. At the request of these friends, I commit these prayers to print.

Except in a few cases where the Revised Version gives a clearer sense, the quotations from Scripture are from the Authorized Version. I desire to express my thanks to The Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. for the privilege of using three prayers from the Presbyterian Book of Common Worship.

W. A. B.

I

WITH JESUS IN THE SCHOOL OF PRAYER

"The Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ."

A PRAYER FOR PEACE

Keep me quiet, Master,
  Patient day by day,
When I would go faster,
  Teach me thy delay.

Restless, oft I borrow
  From the future care.
Teach me that to-morrow
  Shall its burden bear.

From thy full provision
  Daily richly fed,
By thy clearer vision
  Ever safely led,

Let me to my brothers
  Turn a face serene,
Sharing thus with others
  Peace from the Unseen.

Lord, teach us to pray.—Luke XI: 1.

Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you.—Luke XI: 9.

If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?—Luke XI: 13.

Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.—Matthew XVIII: 3.

Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister.—Matthew XX: 26, 27.

O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.—Matthew XXVI: 39.

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me.—Luke IX: 23.

Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.—Luke XXII: 31, 32.

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.—John XVII: 20.

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled; neither let it be afraid. —John XIV: 27.

I

LEARNING TO PRAY

Read Luke XI: 1-13

[A Period of Silence]

Lord, teach us to pray.—vs. 1.

O THOU great Teacher of men, with whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, we come to thee this morning, conscious of our ignorance, that we may receive the enlightenment we need. Purge us of all pride and self-assurance; give unto us the teachable spirit, that drawing near to thee in humility and contrition, we may learn what thou art eager to impart.

I say unto you, Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find.—vs. 9.

IF there be any of us, Lord, who are unconscious of our need, and are content to remain as we are, reveal unto us our littleness and our limitation. If there be any of us who are facing difficulties of the mind and find it hard to believe in thee, help us to trust where we cannot see. If

there be any of us who have lost hope because we have tried to reach thee and failed, renew our courage. May the gracious words of our Master be fulfilled in our ears: Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find.

Father, . . . hallowed be thy name.—vs. 2.

LIVING and eternal God, whom no human eye has seen or thought of man has compassed; Spirit of purity and truth who readest the thoughts of our hearts, help us this morning to realize who and what thou art: the source of all true life, the standard of all sound judgment, the pattern of all right conduct, the satisfaction of our deepest desires, the home of the soul. Holy Father, help us this day to worship thee in spirit and in truth.

Thy Kingdom come.—vs. 2.

O THOU who didst send Jesus Christ to call men from their selfishness and isolation into fellowship with thyself, help us this day to do thy will on earth as it is done in heaven. May we see in each man we meet, that better man it is thy will he should become. May we do to others as we would that they should do to us—not to friends and neighbors only, but to strangers and enemies, even as thou, Father, makest thy sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendest thy rain on the just and the unjust.

Give us day by day our daily bread.—vs. 3.

GIVER of every good and perfect gift, feed us this day with the food we need: food for our bodies, food for our minds, foods for our affections and our loyalty. As we are nourished and sustained by the bread thou givest, may we remember all those who hunger and thirst, are weary and heavy laden. Hasten the day when thy kingdom shall come and thy will be done in all human relationships—in the factory and the farm, in the bank and the store, as well as in the home and the school. May we do our part to hasten that better day, remembering that all we have, we hold in trust for thee and for the neighbor who represents thee.

Forgive us our sins.—vs. 4.

WE come into thy presence, Lord, conscious of our unworthiness. If thou shouldst mark iniquity, O Lord, who shall stand? We hear thee saying to us, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. Yet we have wandered after our own will, and sought our own pleasures, and turned aside from the cross. Forgive us our sins, we beseech thee, and with thy forgiveness, grant us both the will and the power to repent and to amend.

Lead us not into temptation.—vs. 4.

BE with us now as we separate to our several tasks. Grant that this day which thou hast given unto us in mercy may be returned unto thee in service. Be our companion and guide in our studies, in our pleasures, in our familiar intercourse with one another. If it be thy will, lead us not into temptation; but if temptation come, give us strength to resist and to overcome, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. Amen.

II

A DAY IN THE MASTER'S LIFE

Read Mark I: 14-35

[A Period of Silence]

Jesus came . . . preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, and saying . . . Repent. —Mark I: 14, 15.

ALMIGHTY God, our heavenly Father, who hast called us to the ministry of thy word, help us to begin this ministry at home. Grant us this day clear vision of whatever we have done amiss, in word, in deed, and in our secret thoughts, and that deep contrition that shall enable us, by thy grace, to bring forth fruits meet for repentance.

And [he] said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.—vs. 17.

O THOU God and Father of us all, who numberest the hairs of our heads and readest the thoughts of our hearts, without whom we can do nothing aright, help us this day, as we meet our fellows in the intimate contacts of our Seminary life, to see them, as thou seest them, in their divine possibilities; to desire for them what thou

desirest for them, strength and happiness, freedom and courage; and to share with them, if it be thy will, whatever gift or grace we may have received from thee.

He taught them as one that had authority and not as the scribes.—vs. 22.

ALL-SEEING GOD, who art the source of all light and the satisfaction of all desire; in whom are hid the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, grant unto us, we beseech thee, such experience of thee that all our doubts may be banished and our indecisions removed. Building our lives upon the foundation which thou hast laid—even Jesus Christ—may we be able to say with thine Apostle, I know whom I have believed, and that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him.

And there was . . . . a man with an unclean spirit . . . . and Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.—vss. 23, 25.

O THOU who dwellest not in temples made with hands, hater of evil, lover of good, look down, we beseech thee, upon our confused and troubled world. May thy Spirit of righteousness and love cast out the evil spirits which beset and thwart us: selfishness and pride, suspicion and

fear, censoriousness and covetousness, which is idolatry. Purify the hearts which thou hast chosen for thy dwelling place. Enter into the place thou hast thyself prepared, and dwell with us continually as guest and friend.

And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, . . . and he healed many.—vss. 32, 34.

O THOU who art all sufficient, never weary, never in doubt, and who dost desire for us, thy children, that we should be always at our best; thou who knowest all our necessities before we ask thee—the secret sorrow, the unconquered sin, the sense of inadequacy and failure—whatever there may be in each life which we cannot reveal to any other, of which it may be we are but half conscious ourselves; grant us this day the grace we need; that through thy power we may be made strong, and by thine insight we may be made wise, and of thy sufficiency we may be made whole; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he . . . departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.—vs. 35.

HEAVENLY Father, ever present though we see thee not, refuge to which we can ever turn, reservoir from which we can always draw, we

thank thee for this quiet season of communion with thee. Go with us now, we beseech thee, as we separate to our several tasks, and grant that whatever else we may leave behind, we may never be apart from thee. Amen.

III

HOW OUR LORD MET TEMPTATION

Read Matthew IV: 1-11

[A Period of Silence]

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil.—Matthew IV: 1.

O THOU, who dost teach us to pray, Lead us not into temptation, yet wast thyself at all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin, prepare us, we beseech thee, for whatever testing this day may bring. If it be thy will to spare us the strain of sudden decision, make us thankful; but if in thy providence temptation come, give us grace to resist, cost what it may. As thou didst refuse the easy way and didst choose the lonely road that led to the garden and the cross, may we follow in thy steps. May our eyes be open to perceive the Father's will and our wills resolute to follow wherever he shall lead.

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.—vs. 4.

MASTER and Friend, who dost encourage us to pray for daily bread, but wast thyself an hungered; who didst say of the common blessings of life—food, clothing and shelter—your Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things—yet hadst no place to lay thine own head; give us this day that food of which the world knows not. Feed our spirits, we pray thee, with the bread that comes down from heaven, so that, though our outward man perish, the inward man, hungering for thy righteousness, may be renewed day by day.

Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.—vs. 7.

O THOU who didst bid thy disciples to pray, Deliver us from evil, yet thyself didst not escape the bloody sweat and the bitter cross, help us this day to remember before thee in loving sympathy all who are in need, sorrow or distress. As thou didst bear upon thy heart the sorrows of humanity and didst make of thy cross the remedy for the world's sin, help us today to make of the trials and limitations of our own lives a doorway through which to enter into fellowship with other lives. May each burden which thou shalt lay upon us make us more quick to perceive the loads that others are carrying, and each desire which thou shalt withhold fix our hearts more surely upon the treasure which never faileth; that out of

the abundance of thy supply, we may have enough to share with all who are in need.

Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.—vs. 10.

O THOU Christ of God, who didst come preaching the Kingdom, and didst teach thy disciples to pray, thy Kingdom come, yet in thine own experience didst see thy people reject thee, thy disciples forsake thee, and even thy nearest and dearest fail thee in thine hour of need, help us, we beseech thee, as we face the selfishness and unbelief of men, never to lose faith in the final triumph of our Father's purpose. If this day we shall be brought face to face with the fact of sin—in our own lives, in the lives of those we are trying to help—may we remember that on the cross thou hast met sin and conquered it; and, while we bear with patience the sorrow of hope deferred, comfort ourselves with the assurance of coming deliverance.

Then the devil leaveth him; and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.—vs. 11.

GO with us now, as we separate to our several tasks, and grant us in all that we do the ministry of thy protecting Spirit. As thou hast guarded us during the helpless hours of sleep, so do thou guide us during the appointed hours of

labour; that all our tasks may be gladly and faithfully performed, as in thy sight; that our burdens may not be too heavy for us, because thine aid and comfort are with us continually; and that in nothing may we displease thee, or injure one another. But if in anything we fail or come short, through ignorance or weakness, O God, let thy fatherly wisdom correct us and thine infinite mercy forgive us, and thy divine love amend our fault; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

IV

JESUS' SECRET OF HAPPINESS

Read Matthew V: 1-16

[A Period of Silence]

Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.—Matthew V: 3.

O THOU God and Father of us all, who through Jesus Christ our Lord didst say to those desiring to enter thy Kingdom, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye cannot enter therein, grant us, we beseech thee, the child-like spirit. As we face the unknown happenings of this new day, may it be with eyes open to see what our Father would teach us, and wills resolute to follow wherever he shall lead.

Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.—vs. 4.

O THOU compassionate God, the comforter of all who mourn and the binder up of broken hearts, we remember before thee all those from whom thou hast withheld their heart's desire. And if this day we shall be called upon to drink the cup of sorrow, may we not rebel against it as

if some strange thing had happened to us, but accepting it as thy gift, enter into thy peace.

Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth.—vs. 5.

ETERNAL and ever-blessed God, who dost refuse those who are wise in their own conceit, yet hast promised to make thine abode with him who is of an humble and contrite spirit, grant unto us this day that true humility which is possible to those only who see themselves as thou seest them. Thou who didst reject the Pharisee, yet didst accept the publican, have mercy upon us, we beseech thee, miserable sinners.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.—vs. 6.

O THOU who dost not suffer us to be satisfied with little things, but hast set eternity in our hearts, lead us this day, we beseech thee, to the spring of living water where alone our thirst can be quenched. Thou who art the true bread that comest down from heaven, feed our spirits with the food that nourishes character. May we desire nothing less than to be righteous as thou art righteous, loving as thou art loving, patient as thou art patient, pure as thou art pure. May no failure discourage us, no suffering daunt us, no disappoint-

ment weaken our faith in thy power and thy will to do for us all and more than our heart's desire.

Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.—vs. 7.

O THOU God of love, who dost not deal with us after our desert, but art ever more ready to give than we to ask, grant unto us thy spirit of helpfulness. May we see in everyone who comes to us this day asking our help a messenger of him who said, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me; and with the will, grant us also the wisdom to give help that shall be help indeed.

Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.—vs. 8.

O THOU who desirest truth in the inward parts, whom no pretense can deceive, from whom no secret is hid, purify our hearts, we beseech thee; help us to look past all shams and deceit in others—but most of all in ourselves—to the truth as it is in thee; that, seeing thee as thou art, we may be changed into the same image.

Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.—vs. 9.

GRACIOUS Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, who hast made of one blood all the nations upon earth, for-

give us, we pray thee, our unhappy divisions. Strengthen the hands of all who are working for unity in church and in state, and grant that we, who name the name of Christ, may so live together in concord this day that we may share the joy which thou hast promised to those who follow after peace.

Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.—vs. 11.

O THOU Christ of God, who for our sakes didst drink the cup of sorrow and bear upon thy cross the burden of the world's sin, help us this day to take up our cross and follow thee. And if in thy service we shall be called upon to face misunderstanding or to suffer reproach, may we accept them with thankfulness, rejoicing to be counted worthy to suffer for the cause of Christ. For thy name's sake, we ask it. Amen.

V

JESUS' TEST OF DISCIPLESHIP

Read Mark I: 16-20; Luke IX: 57-62; Mark XIV: 27-31; 66-72

[A Period of Silence]

Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And . . . they forsook their nets and . . . left their father . . . and went after him.—Mark I: 17-20.

ALMIGHTY God, who through thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord hast called us to thy ministry and dost permit us to share with thee thy task of winning men, help us to give ourselves wholly to this, our high calling. Whatever thou shalt ask of us, whether it be personal comfort or human companionship, may we keep nothing back.

Suffer me first to go and bury my father.—Luke IX: 59.

LORD, we hear thy voice and would obey, but not today. Thou knowest how many things there are that hold us back—things honorable in themselves, things beautiful and tender which thou must approve: our duty to our parents, our com-

mitments in business, the respect we owe to public opinion, all the ties that bind us to the past. We will follow thee, Lord, but tomorrow, or the day after, when we have freed ourselves from the claims that compete. Suffer us first to go and bury our dead.

Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.—Luke IX: 60.

O THOU compassionate Christ, who dost desire for us no experience through which thou hast not thyself passed, show us what thou dost wish us to do, and give us grace to do it now.

Let me first go and bid them farewell which are at home at my house.—Luke IX: 61.

LORD, we hear thy voice and would obey. We own thy right to all we have and are. But there are other lives which are very near and very dear to us. What thou askest of us may mean separation, not only outward but inward—the severing of old ties, the parting from dear friends, the leaving of home and kindred to go we know not whither, to experience we know not what. Give us time, Lord, to make the needed adjustment. We will come, Lord, presently. But suffer us first a moment of farewell.

No man having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God.—Luke IX: 62.

O THOU uncompromising Christ, who dost ask of us nothing of which thou hast not thyself first given us the example, save us from the divided will. When thou askest of us complete surrender, may we hear thy voice and obey.

I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. —Luke IX: 57.

LORD, we hear thy voice and would obey. We would follow thee whithersoever thou goest, but we know not whither thou art leading us. Thou who didst say to thy disciples, I am the way, and the truth, and the life, show us the way that we may walk in it, and grant us strength and courage to follow it to the end.

And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him . . . Thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.—Mark XIV: 72.

O THOU all-sufficient Christ, who readest the thoughts of men and dost press past all the deceptions and subterfuges by which we hide ourselves even from ourselves; thou whom we have promised to follow to the end and yet have so often

denied; reveal unto each one of us, we beseech thee, our point of present danger, and in our hour of temptation, hold us true to thee.

Now unto him who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy; to the only wise God, our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

VI

WHAT IT COSTS TO FOLLOW JESUS AND WHAT IT BRINGS

Read Luke IX: 18-27

[A Period of Silence]

And he asked them saying, Whom say the people that I am? They answering said, John the Baptist; but some say Elias; and others say that one of the old prophets is risen again.—Luke IX: 18, 19.

O THOU Lord and Master of us all, who desirest truth in the inward parts, to whom each one of us standeth or falleth, help us today, forgetting what others have told us about thee, to listen only to what thou thyself art saying to us. We thank thee for all thou hast meant to those who before us have followed thee—parents and friends, prophets and apostles, martyrs and saints, churchmen and those who for thy sake have dared to break with the church. But we know that the faith of others cannot take the place of our own faith, or the experience of others relieve us of the responsibility of testing thee for ourselves. Thou who

dost stand at the door and knock, enter in, we beseech thee, and dwell with us this day.

Peter answering, said: The Christ of God.—vs. 20.

O THOU Christ of God, who didst bear on thy heart the burden of the world's sorrow and sin, who art even now grieving for our shortcomings and saddened by our hardness of heart, help us to see men and women as thou seest them, in their divine possibilities and in their human limitations: our fellow students in the Seminary; our family and friends; the boys in our clubs; the people in our churches; the strangers whom we meet in passing; above all, ourselves, whom thou dost invite to have part in thy ministry of reconciliation, yet who so far fall short of that which thou dost desire us to be.

And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.—vs. 23.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who of thy tender love towards mankind hast sent thy Son our Savior, Jesus Christ, to take upon him our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross, that all mankind should follow the example of his great humility, mercifully grant that we may both follow the example of his patience and also be made

partakers of his resurrection. As he did not shrink from the sacrifice which thou didst require from him, give us courage this day to deny ourselves and take up our cross and follow him. Show us the way which he has walked before us, that we may walk it after him.

Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.—vs. 24.

ETERNAL and ever-living God, our heavenly Father, who didst raise from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, and dost promise to raise from the death of sin all those who put their trust in thee, grant us such experience of the freedom and peace that come to those who live with Christ, that we may be able to witness acceptably to all who are in need. Hear us now as in loving intercession we remember before thee our friends and kindred from whom we are separated: those of our number who are absent and those who are sick, all whom we would fain help but cannot reach; that out of thy fatherly goodness thou wouldst give them—with the supply of all lesser needs—thy gift of gifts, even life everlasting.

There be some standing here that shall not taste of death till they see the Kingdom of God.—vs. 27.

O THOU God of hope, who hast promised to those who love thee such good gifts as pass man's understanding, grant us if it be thy will even here and now, such fellowship with those who love and follow Christ that we can say with truth, Mine eyes have seen the Kingdom. Even while we wait for the day when thy will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven and the kingdoms of the world become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, may we anticipate its coming in present experience of righteousness and peace and joy.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, we ask it. Amen.

VII

TWO WAYS OF REALIZING THE GLORY OF GOD

Read Luke IX: 28-43a; Matthew XVII: 19, 20

[A Period of Silence]

And . . . he took Peter and John and James and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered . . . and when they were awake they saw his glory.—Luke IX: 28, 29, 32.

FATHER in heaven, who dost grant to us, creatures of time and change, visions of the eternal; thou who art ever the same, yet changest alway; who dost clothe the earth with verdure and givest radiance to the rising sun, we praise thee for the revelation of thyself which thou hast made in Jesus Christ, thy word made flesh. Take us up with him into the mountain. Open the eyes which are yet heavy with sleep to the divinity by which we are encompassed. As we contemplate our Master's life, so like us in its conflicts, so unlike us in its victory, may we see his visage transfigured,

and, beholding his glory, rejoice in the revelation of thy majesty and thy love.

Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here . . . not knowing what he said.—vs. 33.

O THOU Lord and Master of us all, man as we are men, tempted as we are tempted, teach us thy secret of triumphant life. We have come here this morning to learn of thee. Gladly would we linger in thy company, forgetting the world of sinning, suffering men to which thou art calling us. Help us to learn that wherever we go, thou dost precede us. As we leave this place of privilege to face the unknown issues of this new day, be thou our companion and guide.

And it came to pass . . . when they were come down from the hill, much people met him.—vs. 37.

O THOU friend of man, who didst yearn over Jerusalem, seeing in each of its countless lives a child of God made for the Father's fellowship, grant us thy gift of sympathy. As we touch our fellows this day in this great city, may we think of them as thou art thinking, desire for them what thou dost desire, and be willing, as thou art willing, to give our lives for them to the uttermost.

And, behold a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son, for he is mine only child. And lo, a spirit taketh him . . . And I besought thy disciples to cast him out; and they could not . . . And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child . . . And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God.—vss. 38-40, 42, 43.

O THOU man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, touched at all points with our infirmities, yet without sin; healer of the sick, binder up of broken hearts, reconciler of warring spirits, hear us, we beseech thee, as we bring before thee in loving intercession all who are in need—those whom we know and love and those whom thou alone knowest and for whom thou alone carest. Be with the sick in our Seminary fellowship; the sorrowful and those who are perplexed and burdened by care or doubt. Hasten the day when all men everywhere shall know thee, and, experiencing thy power to heal and to renew, shall glorify thee for the wonder of thy love. O seeker of the lost, shepherd of the sheep, savior of the soul, hear us, we beseech thee, in this our morning prayer.

Then came the disciples to Jesus apart and said: Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them: Because of

your unbelief. For verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed . . . nothing shall be impossible unto you.—Matthew XVII: 19, 20.

MOST of all, O Master, we would pray for thy gift of faith. Thou hast promised that those who ask shall receive, that those who seek shall find, that to those who knock it shall be opened. Lord, we believe; help thou our unbelief. As thou didst renew thy spirit from the reservoir of the eternal, make us today to drink of the water of life. Strengthen us for the day's task of self-discipline or of self-forgetting ministry. Give us the faith that overcomes. For thy name's sake, we ask it. Amen.

VIII

"NOBLESSE OBLIGE"

Read John XIII: 1-17

[A Period of Silence]

Jesus . . . having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.—John XIII: 1.

DEAR Lord and Master of us all, whom not having seen we love; in whom, though now we see thee not, we yet believe, reveal thyself unto us, we beseech thee, as in this quiet hour we draw near unto thee. As in thine earthly life thou didst draw unto thyself thy disciples through a comprehending love that no failure could daunt or blindness discourage, so draw us unto thee, we beseech thee, through the mystery of thy compassion and the challenge of thy trust.

Knowing that the Father had given all things unto his hand, and that he was come from God and went to God . . . he took a towel and girded himself . . . and began to wash the disciples' feet.—John XIII: 3-5.

O THOU inexhaustible Christ, God's word to us in human life, in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, open our eyes, we beseech thee, that we may perceive the deeper meaning of thy life, outwardly so unpretentious. We see thee walking as a man among men: gentle, gracious, uncomplaining. We hear thee saying, Follow me, and when we ask what shall be our guerdon, thou sayest, a cross. Open to us the meaning of thy condescension, as with wondering eyes we see thee, Master and Lord of all, gird thyself as a servant and wash thy disciples' feet.

Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet . . . Thou shalt never wash my feet.—John XIII: 6, 8.

WHAT must we feel toward thee, Lord, when we see thee, the Master, stoop to the servant's place We, who should be thy comrades on life's journey, shall we rest while thou art toiling; we, who should be thy helpers with life's burdens, shall we sit while thou art bending? This be far from thee, Lord. Summon and we will follow; command and we will perform. But ask not this thing of us. Lord, thou shalt never wash our feet.

If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.—John XIII: 8.

O THOU all-comprehending Christ, whom we have proved in many a dark hour, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that we love thee. But so often thy ways are strange and we do not fathom their meaning. We know that thou dost nothing without purpose. We hear thee say, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Open thy word to us, we beseech thee, that we may understand and obey.

Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am . . . The servant is not greater than his Lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.—John XIII: 13, 16.

O LORD, we have called thee Master with our lips. We have said unto thee, not once but many times, Lord, Lord; yet in our hearts we have retained always some secret place not surrendered to thy control. We have called thee Lord, and tried to shape our lives according to our own will and not to thine. We have called thee Master, but dared to dictate to thee how thou shouldst plan thy life and order thy kingdom. Forgive us, Lord, our inconsistency. Uncover to us the pride that cloaks itself with the pretense of humility. Teach us that of a truth the servant is not greater than his lord. Help us to pray, not with our

lips, but from our hearts, Thy will, not mine, be done.

If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet, For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.—John XIII: 14, 15.

O THOU best friend of man, who though Master and Lord hast not used the master's right to unquestioning obedience, but as comrade dost open unto us thy meaning and invite us to share thine inmost thoughts, reveal to us, we beseech thee, the mystery of thy ministering love. Show us that what thou hast done for us it is thy will that we should do for others. Following thine example, may we learn that it is more blessed to give than to receive. Amen.

If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.—John XIII: 17.

IX

THE DARK HOUR

Read Matthew XXVI: 30-46

[A Period of Silence]

Then cometh Jesus . . . unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.—Matthew XXVI: 36.

ETERNAL and ever blessed God, who out of thy great compassion for weak and erring men didst not spare thine own Son but didst give him freely for us all, that we, by his sacrifice, might be reconciled to thee; grant us thy Spirit, we beseech thee, as we, like thy disciples of old, become spectators of the sufferings which he endured on our behalf.

Then saith he unto [the disciples], My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Tarry ye here, and watch with me.—vs. 38.

O THOU great Friend of man, who like us dost shrink from suffering; lover of joy and beauty and of every simple and happy thing, playmate of children, welcome guest at the wedding

feast, help us to understand thee now as we see thee enter upon the path which thou must tread alone. God forgive us that we for whom thou hast done so much have added to the load which thou art carrying. May we not shrink from the revelation of our own shortcoming, but beholding thy sorrow, learn to understand ourselves.

And he went a little farther and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.—vs. 39.

WAS there any sorrow, Lord, like thy sorrow—the sorrow of a love that was despised and rejected of men—the love of the good for the evil, of the wise for the ignorant, of the patient for the headstrong, of the selfless for the selfish; the love that would heal but could not reach; that would save but could not find; that would share but met no outstretched hand; that would enter in but could find no open heart.

And he cometh unto the disciples and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation.—vss. 40, 41.

O THOU long-suffering Savior, who for our sakes art ever watching till the hour come when we are ready to receive what thou wouldst impart, forgive us that when thou dost invite us to watch with thee, we should be found wanting. Thou who didst take Peter and James and John with thee into the garden wouldst reveal to us today the mystery of thy sorrow, the tragedy of thy cross. Open our eyes, we beseech thee, that we may see what thou seest. Pierce our hearts, we beseech thee, that we may feel what thou dost feel.

He went away again the second time and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup can not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done.—vs. 42.

WAS there any sorrow like this sorrow—the sorrow of an hour when faith could see no light amid the encompassing clouds; an hour that brought to thee separation from kindred, the doubt of friends, the rejection of countrymen, the denial of disciples, the repulse of love, the loss of the consciousness of God himself?

Help us to watch with thee, Master, in this thy sorrow. Thou who didst drink the cup the Father gave, grant that when our testing comes, we may be found faithful.

And he left them and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Then cometh he to the disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now and take your rest . . . Behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.—vss. 44-46.

WAS ever any sorrow like this sorrow—the sorrow of hope deferred? Thou who didst come to preach good tidings to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, art still waiting for the time when those for whom thou didst give thy life shall be willing to receive what thou hast to give. Forbid that any blindness or carelessness of ours should postpone the day when thou shalt see of the travail of thy soul and be satisfied. In the hour when all men forsake thee, may we be found faithful.

Now unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood . . . to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

X

JESUS' PRAYER FOR HIS DISCIPLES

Read John XVII: 1-26

[A Period of Silence]

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father . . . —John XVII: 1.

O THOU present Christ who hast taught us to say, Our Father, help us this morning to pray that prayer after thee. As we draw near to the close of the term and begin to count the days before we must separate, help us to realize more vividly our unity in thee. Forgive us for our carelessness and our blindness, our wandering thoughts and our lost opportunities, and help us to use the hours that remain in ways that are worthy of thee. Above all, grant us thy consciousness of the unseen Father of whom thou art ever reminding us, that trusting him as thou didst trust him, we may find in him what thou didst find.

Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.—vs. 11.

ALMIGHTY God, who seest the end from the beginning, we commit ourselves this day to thy fatherly keeping. We have not chosen thee, but thou hast chosen us to be disciples of thy Son and ministers of thy gospel. When we are tempted to swerve to the right hand or to the left, give us grace to hold the straight path. When other masters claim our allegiance, may we remember that we are not our own but his to whom thou hast given us.

This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.—vs. 3.

O THOU living God who by thy creative spirit art ever sharing with us thy creatures thine eternal and ever-blessed life, teach us thy secret of unhurried work. May we know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent; that knowing thee we may trust thee, and trusting thee, may serve thee, and serving thee, may rejoice in thee, who art the Father of our spirits and the source of our ideals; to know whom is to have life indeed.

I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me.—vs. 8.

SPIRIT of truth and beauty, who art ever revealing thyself to those who have eyes to see and ears to hear; Father of our spirits, who in

Jesus Christ, thy word made flesh, hast shown us who thou art and what thou dost desire, grant unto us, we beseech thee, such clear vision of thyself that we may be able to interpret thee to others. Speak to us, weak and imperfect as we are, thy words of eternal life, that repeating them after thee, not with our lips only but in our lives, we may become thy ministers to those who are in need.

I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them because they are not of the world. . . . I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.—vss. 14, 15.

COMPASSIONATE GOD, who desirest for thy children only the best, yet didst not withhold from thy beloved Son, our Lord, the cup of sorrow, be thou our companion and stay this day. If temptation beset us, give us grace to resist; if opposition come, to stand firm. Arm us against those subtle influences of our environment that under fair names and with specious promises are trying to draw us away from thee. When we are tempted to take the easy path, hold ever before our eyes the cross and him who hung thereon. Thou, who hast sent us into the world that we may be thy witnesses to the world, keep us from the evil of the world.

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.—vs. 20.

O THOU Christ of God who didst say to thy disciples, The works that I do shall ye do also and greater works than these shall ye do because I go to my Father, grant us that love for men that was in thee and that faith in the power of love that did sustain thee. As we take up the work of ministry that thou didst lay down, may we be conscious of those reserves of power upon which thou didst draw. When our best efforts seem to fail and our word returns to us without effect, may we remember that the same Spirit which drew us to thee is silently at work in the hearts of those we would help. Reveal to us those faults in ourselves which make our witness ineffective. So unite us to thyself that we may feel our unity with all who sincerely trust and follow thee. Teach us so to express this unity in effective living that those who are now kept from the fellowship of thy church by our unhappy divisions may no longer hold aloof but seeing the unity of thy disciples in work and worship may believe that the Father did send thee.

Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.—vs. 24.

WE thank thee, Lord, for these moments of quiet spent in thy presence before the pressure of the day come upon us. As we separate to our several tasks, be thou our companion on the way; and as we pray that thou wilt be with us, help us not to forget that other prayer that we may be with thee. Keep us this day on the heights. May we see clearly, feel deeply, give without reserve. Show us thy glory, the glory of a love that held nothing back, that sharing with thee thy ministry we may be partakers of thy joy. In thy name, we ask it. Amen.

Now unto him who is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

II

THE ENCOMPASSING PRESENCE

"The Love of God."

A PRAYER FOR THE OPEN EYE

Afar I sought thee in the radiant sky,
  But thou art near.
In every breeze that sings its lullaby
  Thy voice I hear.

Afar I sought thee in heroic deed,
  Still to be done,
But thou dost speak in every brother's need
  Beneath the sun.

So let me feel thy presence day by day
  In wind and sod,
That every bush I meet upon my way
  Shall glow with God.

So let thy Spirit kindle my desire,
  Self to deny,
That every common deed shall flame with fire,
  As doth thy sky.

Be still, and know that I am God.—Psalm XLVI: 10.

Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.—Psalm XC: 1.

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.—Psalm XCI: 1.

Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence. If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.—Psalm CXXXIX: 7, 8.

For thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, . . . I dwell . . . with him . . . that is of a contrite and humble spirit.—Isaiah LVII: 15.

The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.—Psalm XXIII: 1.

Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.—Psalm CIII: 13.

As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.—Isaiah LXVI: 13.

In all their affliction he was afflicted. . . . In his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them and carried them all the days of old.—Isaiah LXIII: 9.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. . . . Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.—Psalm LI: 10, 13.

The Library

I

THE EXPERIENCE OF A MAN ALONE WITH GOD

Read Psalm LI

[A Period of Silence]

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness. According to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.—Psalm LI: 1.

GRACIOUS God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, we have come here this morning to meet thee. As we linger a moment in thy presence before the day's tasks claim us, may we be conscious that thou art here. Thou, the all righteous, dost invite us sinners to share thy holiness. Thou, the all merciful, wouldst make us mortals partakers of thy sufficiency; but we, beguiled by the interest of the moment, are content with little things. How canst thou give what we are not willing to receive, or impart to us what we do not desire? Put into our hearts the longing for the greater gifts. Help us this morning so

to ask that we may receive; so to seek that we shall find.

For I acknowledge my transgressions. . . . Against thee, thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight.—Psalm LI: 3, 4.

WE are not worthy of thy goodness. Thou alone knowest how often we have sinned, in wandering from thy ways, in wasting thy gifts, in forgetting thy love. But thou, O Lord, have pity upon us who are ashamed and sorry for all wherein we have displeased thee. Teach us to hate our errors; cleanse us from our secret faults; and forgive our sins for the sake of thy dear Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. And O most holy and loving Father, send thy purifying grace into our hearts, we beseech thee, that we may henceforth live by thy light and walk in thy ways according to the commandment of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.—Psalm LI: 6.

O THOU all wise and holy God, who seest the end from the beginning, with whom are the issues of life—thou who art light of light, with whom is no darkness at all, send into our hearts, we beseech thee, thy purifying and enlightening

Spirit. Deliver us from all hypocrisy and self deceit. May we see things as they are; in others, but most of all, in ourselves. Thou who desirest truth in the inward parts, grant us this day thy gift of sincerity. Thou from whom nothing is hidden, make us to know wisdom.

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.—Psalm LI: 10.

CREATIVE Spirit, who art able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think; from whom alone proceed right thoughts and holy desires, purify our hearts, we beseech thee, with the fire that comes from on high. Thou who art all holy, grant us thy singleness and sincerity. Lord and giver of life, quicken our sluggish nature so that it shall respond to every invitation to good. Hold ever before our eyes the example of Jesus, our Master, who pleased not himself, but gave himself wholeheartedly for others, that, sharing his ministry, we may enter into his reward.

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.—Psalm LI: 12, 13.

O THOU who hast redeemed us from sin and death and committed unto us thy ministry of reconciliation, reconcile us first unto thyself. How shall we give that which we have not already received, or share what we do not possess. Write thy word upon our hearts, we beseech thee. Grant us thy gift of happiness. Deliver us from fear, the fear of others, the more insidious fear of ourselves. As free men and women may we walk this day with heads erect and shining faces, a source of strength and comfort to all whom we may meet upon our way.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, we ask it. Amen.

II

THE DECEITFULNESS OF TEMPTATION

Read Genesis III: 1-19; Ephesians VI: 10-13

[A Period of Silence]

And (the serpent) said, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat?—Genesis III: 1.

Take heed . . . lest any of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.—Hebrews III: 12, 13.

SPIRIT of truth, who for our good dost hold ever before us the ideal of perfection, forgive us that we so easily avert our eyes from the vision by which thou wouldst draw us unto thyself. In this world where it is so easy to turn aside from the straight and narrow path into byways of excitement or of ambition, fortify us, we beseech thee, against those enticing voices which would persuade us that we can evade thine inexorable law.

The woman saw that the tree was good for food.—Genesis III: 6.

It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth.—Romans XIV: 21.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast made us for happiness and not for repression, guard us against the temptations that come to us by the avenue of sense; and when they beset us, give us strength to resist. Thou, who hast put within us appetites of hunger and thirst and sex which clamor for satisfaction, help us to make the body which thou hast given us our servant and not our master.

The tree was . . . pleasant to the eyes.—Genesis III: 6.

If God so clothe the grass of the field . . . shall he not much more clothe you?—Matthew VI: 30.

ETERNAL God, who hast formed us for harmony and not for discord, and dost lend to thy world of time and sense graces of form and colour that arrest and delight, help us this day to recognize the temptations that come to us through our love of the beautiful, and when we recognize, to resist. From the loveliness that fades because it is partial and divisive, may we rise to the beauty which alone can permanently satisfy—that beauty which is fresh every morning and new every evening, even the beauty of holiness which thou hast uncovered to us in the face of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

The tree [was] to be desired to make man wise.—Genesis III: 6.

Be not wise in your own conceits.—Romans XII: 16.

O GOD of light, who hast made us for knowledge and not for ignorance, look down upon us this morning, a company of students, as we face the tasks and problems of this new day. Help us to recognize the temptations that come to us through our desire to know, and when we recognize to resist. Deliver us from the pride of opinion; from the curiosity which is barren and not creative. Bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, that, knowing him who is the Truth, we may become free indeed.

(She) gave . . . unto her husband . . . and he did eat.—Genesis III: 6.

It must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! —Matthew XVIII: 7.

O GOD of love who hast formed us for fellowship and not for solitude, deliver us most of all, we beseech thee, from those temptations which come to us through our affections and friendships. Suffer us not through thoughtlessness or wilfulness to lead any child of thine into sin. May we realize that even in the smallest things no one of us lives to himself. If we are

tempted to allow ourselves any indulgence, however innocent, which may be a source of danger to others, help us to recognize this as a temptation and when we recognize, to resist.

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man.—I Corinthians X: 13.

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life.—James I: 12.

GRACIOUS God, who dost not suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able to bear, grant us this day the reenforcement of thy companionship. As we fight the good fight of faith, give us strength to withstand, courage to dare; that mounting step by step in our ascent toward the heights, we may receive from thee the gifts thou art ever ready to impart—happiness and beauty and wisdom and love; and, enjoying thee more and more, may enter into fulness of life.

III

THE ENCOMPASSING PRESENCE

Read Psalm CXXXIX

[A Period of Silence]

O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me; . . . thou understandest my thought afar off.—Psalm CXXXIX: 1, 2.

O THOU who art from everlasting to everlasting, whom finite thought cannot measure or human experience exhaust, we commit ourselves to thy care at the beginning of this day; knowing that though we do not comprehend thee, thou knowest us altogether, and art sufficient for all our need.

Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.—vs. 5.

WE thank thee for all the way thou hast led us in the past—for home, for friends, for work, for experience, for sorrow, and for joy. We rejoice that in that unknown future toward which we are moving, thou art going before and art waiting even now to meet us.

If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me;

even the night shall be light about me.—vs. 11.

O THOU who art light and in whom is no darkness at all, from whom we would fain hide ourselves, because we know that in thy pure and holy presence we shall be convicted of sin, reveal thyself now unto us, we beseech thee, that in thy marvelous light we may see ourselves as thou seest us; the baser self we have too often been, the better self by thy grace we may become.

How precious . . . are thy thoughts unto me, O God; how great is the sum of them.—vs. 17.

FATHER of the solitary, Comforter of those who mourn, Friend and Companion of those who rejoice, Guide of the perplexed, the inexhaustible source of happiness, of courage, and of wisdom, we rejoice to know that what we cannot wisely plan for ourselves, thou art even now planning for us; and what we cannot provide for ourselves, thou art even now ready to give us.

Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee?—and am I not grieved with those that rise up against thee?—vs. 21.

O THOU Father of us all, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, who didst send Jesus Christ our Lord to establish

thy kingdom on earth, the kingdom of righteousness and joy and peace, help us, we beseech thee, as we touch our fellows this day in the complex relations of our common life, to desire what thou dost purpose, and to hate what thou dost despise. May the standards by which we judge the men we meet be the standards of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desires for men nothing but the best and grieves when they miss what he has to give.

Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.—vss. 23, 24.

O GOD, our Father, as we rise from our knees and go about our several duties, may we not leave thee behind. Grant unto each one of us that heavenly guidance and control, in all our labours, pleasures, and trials, which shall maintain our hearts in peace with one another and with thee. Graciously help and prosper us in the doing of our various duties, with a willing and a cheerful mind; and defend us all, by thine almighty power, both from inward evil and from outward harm; so that, when the day is ended, it may not leave us in sorrow, strife, or shame, but in true unity and thankful rest, through thy merciful favour and thy forgiving love, in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

IV

WHAT ONE MAN FOUND IN NATURE

Read Psalm CIV

[A Period of Silence]

O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all.—Psalm CIV: 24.

FATHER almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible, as we wake this day to the wonders of thy world, grant us, we beseech thee, the spirit of reverence and of thanksgiving. Thou who art all wise and all holy, reveal thyself to us in thy works—the kindly earth by which we are nourished and supported; the moving waters that purify and refresh; the heavens by which we are overarched; the air we breathe; the trees that shade us; the flowers and the birds; sun, moon and stars that give us light; day with its work, night with its rest. O Lord, our Lord, how manifold are thy works. In wisdom hast thou made them all.

Who coverest thyself with light, as with a garment.—Psalm CIV: 2.

THE ENCOMPASSING PRESENCE

O THOU who dwellest in light unapproachable, with whom is no darkness at all, open our eyes, we beseech thee, to the beauty and the meaning of the world by which we are encompassed. May we not be content to rest upon the surface of things, but behind the garment wherewith thou dost clothe thyself, catch the outline of a divine form, and above the silence of our unanswered questions, hear the beating of a divine heart. Spirit of wisdom and truth, grant us thy light, that whatever experience the day may bring —sorrow or joy, success or failure—we may receive it as thy gift and be thankful.

Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed forever.—Psalm CIV: 5.

O THOU who changest not, the same yesterday, today and forever; with whom a thousand years are but as yesterday when it is passed and as a watch in the night, we thank thee that when all about us seems to fail we may put our trust in thee. Thou who dost bind the changing seasons into the unity of the years; who canst weave the passing years into the pattern of a character, open our eyes to see thy purpose for us and for thy world. O thou God of law, with whom is no variableness, or shadow that is cast by turning,

may we build our lives upon the foundation which thou hast laid—even Jesus Christ.

Thou sendest forth thy Spirit; they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth.—Psalm CIV: 30.

CREATIVE Spirit, who art ever at work in thy world, fashioning out of ion and electron forms of wonder and of beauty; thou who canst bring light out of darkness, joy out of sorrow, righteousness out of sin, we thank thee for thy gift of life. Thou to whose power there are no limits, make of us this day what thou wouldst have us to be. Forgetting the things that are behind, may we press on to the things that are before, and renewing our spirits through contact with thy divine Spirit, go from strength to strength and from joy to joy.

Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labor until the evening.—Psalm CIV: 23.

O THOU who art never idle, never at a loss, we thank thee for thy gift of work. These tasks to which thou dost summon us, which we did not choose and cannot evade, help us to realize them as opportunities sent by thee; and, accepting them as thy will, to perform them to thy glory. Be with us in our study; in our contacts with our fellows; in our hours of fatigue; in our moments

of temptation. And as we turn to each new task, may we be able to say with our Master, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

The glory of the Lord shall endure forever; . . .
I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live.
—Psalm CIV: 31, 33.

MOST of all, O God, we thank thee for thy gift of beauty. Thou who dost lend sea and sky form and colour, perfume to the flowers, taste to the palate, harmony to thought, holiness to character, we rejoice today in thy perfection and would sing thy praise while we have any being. Thou who art all holy and all beautiful, teach us this day to worship thee in the beauty of holiness.

And to thy name shall be the praise, world without end. Amen.

V

HOW A MAN FOUND GOD AWAY FROM HOME

Read Genesis XXVII: 41-45; XXVIII: 10-22

[A Period of Silence]

And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran; and he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set.—Genesis XXVIII: 10, 11.

O THOU, who seest the end from the beginning, with whom is no near and no far, be our companion, we beseech thee, in this day upon which we are entering. As we move into the unknown future, be thou our protector and guide. If in thy providence we shall be called to face difficulties we cannot surmount, sorrows from which we cannot escape, responsibilities for which our shoulders are too weak, may we remember that strength and courage, comfort and joy are with thee. When we come to the place where we can go no farther because the light has failed, may we lie down and rest in peace, knowing that thou who never sleepest art watching.

And he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows.—vs. 11.

GOD of the darkness as of the light, of the night as of the day, help us to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. If thou shalt withhold from us this day any support on which we have been accustomed to lean in the outer world or in the inner; if some friend we trusted fail us, some hope be denied on which we had confidently relied; if the unquestioning faith of yesterday seems impossible today, may we this day experience thy power to transform and to renew. May we find in our difficulties teachers sent by thee, and out of the limitations and obstacles which seem to bar our progress, win discipline which shall make us adequate for whatever tasks thou shalt require.

And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth; and the top of it reached to heaven.—vs. 12.

OUR Father who art in heaven, source of our ideals and satisfaction of our desires, who —through thy Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ—hast taught us to pray, Thy will be done in earth, as it is done in heaven, open our eyes, we beseech thee, to the unseen influences by which we are encompassed. May we realize that not in Palestine only long ago, but in this busy city today, earth and

heaven are ever touching; that wherever we stand, we have but to lift up our eyes, and, behold, a stairway by which we can mount up to thee. We have but to open our hearts, and lo! a door through which thou art even now waiting to enter in to us.

And behold the Lord stood above it and said: I am the Lord God of Abraham, thy father . . . And behold I am with thee.—vss. 13, 15.

GOD of our fathers and of our fathers' fathers, thou who art from everlasting to everlasting, with whom a thousand years are but as yesterday when it is past and as a watch in the night; we thank thee that as we move forward into the future, we do not leave the past behind; that when we enter into the solitude of our chamber and shut the door, we do not bar out thine other children, for whom thou carest, even as thou carest for us. As we seek this day for ourselves the help we need for the day's tasks, we would bring before thee in loving intercession all for whom we care, and would fain help if we could; kindred and friends; fellow students; the boys in our clubs; the congregations to whom we minister—any who may be facing need or sorrow in mind, body or estate—and all that greater company, unknown to us but known to thee, who, with us, are

journeying toward the unknown future, and may lose their way if they stray from thee.

And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely, the Lord is in this place and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place. This is none other but the house of God.—vss. 16, 17.

O THOU righteous Father, near us in thy tenderness and compassion, yet infinitely removed from us by thy purity and perfect love, forgive us, we beseech thee, that in a world where thou art everywhere present to warn and to help, we work so often with blinded eyes, we walk so often with heedless steps. Thou who art ever with us, though we see thee not; unseen companion of all our journeys, though we hear thee not, reveal thyself unto us this day. Grant unto us that reverent appreciation of the divine possibilities of the commonest things, that wherever we go and whatever we do, we may be able to say with truth, How awe inspiring is this place. This is none other than the house of God.

And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go . . . then shall the Lord be my God.—vss. 20, 21.

O THOU all-wise and loving Father, who knowest our necessities before we ask and our ignorance in asking, we do not need to ask thee to go with us this day, for wherever we may go, thou wilt be our companion. But thou canst not give us what we are not prepared to receive, or do for us what we do not desire. Help us this day to surrender our will completely to thee, our Master and Friend. May we seek first thy kingdom and thy righteousness, and be able from our hearts to pray, Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, we ask it. Amen.

VI

THE LAND OF PROMISE

Read Genesis XI: 27, 28, 31, 32; XII: 1-9.
Hebrews XI: 1, 8-10; XII: 1, 2

[A Period of Silence]

Now the Lord had said unto Abram: Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee.—Genesis XII: 1.

O GOD, who art ever calling us out of the familiar and the near into new scenes and novel experiences, look down upon us this morning, a company of men and women gathered from many countries and from many homes, in these new surroundings where, it may be, many of us still feel ourselves strangers. May we realize that whatever else we have left behind, thou art still with us, our companion and guide; and that where thou art, there is home.

By faith Abraham, when he was called . . . obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.—Hebrews XI: 8.

O THOU, who seest the end from the beginning, we would commit ourselves unto thy fatherly guidance at the beginning of this new day. We move forward into a future that thou hast hidden from us, not knowing what a day or an hour may bring forth; knowing only that whatever may befall us, nothing but our own wilfulness can separate us from thine encompassing love. Grant us this day the child-like spirit, that when thou speakest, we may hear; and when thou commandest, we may obey.

By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country.—Hebrews XI: 9.

GIVER of every good and perfect gift, who dost prepare for those that love thee such good things as pass man's understanding, we thank thee for thy loving kindness to us and to all men. We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life, but above all, for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace and for the hope of glory. Help us to remember, as we use the earthly gifts thou dost impart, that they are given us in trust, not for ourselves only, but for others. And while we enjoy and use the things we see and taste and handle, may we never forget the better gifts still in store for us—things that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard,

neither have entered into the heart of man—whatsoever things God hath prepared for those who love him.

For he looked for a city which hath foundations; whose builder and maker is God.—Hebrews XI: 10.

ETERNAL and ever-living God; to whom a thousand years are but as yesterday when it is passed and as a watch in the night; thou who fashionest all things after the pattern of thy will, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy; grant us today a vision of that true fellowship into which thou art calling thy children. May we never rest satisfied with the limitations and compromises of our life here—its cruel competition, its unbridled selfishness, its engrossment in the little and the near; but may we seek after that better city which our Lord Jesus Christ came to establish—that kingdom of God which is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.—Hebrews XI: 1.

CREATIVE Spirit, who hast set question in our hearts, we thank thee that for every question thou hast an answer. Hearer and answerer of the prayer of faith, grant us today the

assurance we need. Where we cannot see, may we trust; where we cannot understand, may we obey —that, trusting and obeying, we may find our questions answered, our doubts resolved, and prove in our own lives the truth of thy word: Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed.

Wherefore . . . let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, . . . looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.—Hebrews XII: 1, 2.

O THOU who wast tempted at all points, like as we are, yet without sin, help us this day to live worthily of thee. We know not what the day may bring, of outward enticement or of inward strain, to test our sincerity and reveal us to ourselves. When the hour of our trial comes, may we be found faithful, cost what it may. Help us to break with every habit that would hold us back; to renounce every indulgence that would weigh us down. If our right hand offend us, may we cut it off; if our right eye offend us, may we pluck it out. When thy call comes to surrender, may we keep nothing back.

For thy name's sake, we ask it. Amen.

VII

THE GIFT OF COURAGE

Read Psalm XXVII

[A Period of Silence]

When thou saidst, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek. —Psalm XXVII: 8.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast formed us for thyself; Spirit within that reaches out to that which is beyond, and up to that which is above, help us to understand what thou art saying to us this day. We come to thee, creatures of time and change, with our narrow vision and our petty concerns; our inconstant wills and our broken purposes, not sure even that we desire the gifts of which our lips speak. Put into our hearts such longing for thyself, that we shall yield ourselves completely to thine invitation, and follow thee whithersoever thou shalt lead. When thou sayest, Seek ye my face, may our hearts answer, Thy face, Lord, will we seek.

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?—vs. 1.

O GOD, who art light and life and energy; for whom no mystery is too dark and no task too difficult, we thank thee that though we are ignorant, thou art wise; and though we are weak, thou art strong. Help us this morning to lay hold upon the arm which thou dost reach out to us, and as we move forward into the unknown experiences of this new day, be thou our companion and guide. If danger come, grant us courage; if hardship, endurance; if we sin, forgive us. Trusting thee in all things, may we prove the truth of thy promise, My strength is made perfect in weakness.

One thing have I desired of the Lord; that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.—vs. 4.

CREATIVE Spirit, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain; yet who dost clothe with beauty each least thing which thou hast made, open our eyes, we beseech thee, to the wonder of thy world. As we study thy works in nature, in history, in the heart of man, may we never forget who it is that has formed them for our wonder and our delight. May the spring speak to us of thy power to restore and renew; the summer of thy purpose to enrich and beautify; the autumn of our privilege of ripe experience and fruitful

service; the winter of the coming night which is the doorway through which we pass into the perfect day. Living all our lives in the home which thou hast made for us and for all thy children, may we rejoice in its beauty and grow in understanding of its meaning.

For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion; . . . therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy.—vss. 5, 6.

O THOU who readest the thoughts of man and art acquainted with all our ways, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, we thank thee that there is no experience through which thou dost call us to pass, but thou, O Lord, knowest it altogether. God of the light, we rejoice that thou art the God of the darkness also; that there is no question for which thou hast not an answer, no suffering for which thou hast not healing, no sorrow for which thou hast not comfort, no sin for which thou hast not forgiveness. If trouble come to us this day, be thou our helper. Keep us under the shelter of thy presence, that with understanding hearts we may offer unto thee our sacrifice of joy.

Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path because of mine enemies.—vs. 11.

O GOD, who didst not spare thine only Son, but didst permit him to endure the contradictions of wicked men, grant unto us his spirit of forgiveness. Take away from our hearts all bitterness and resentment. May we not return evil for evil, but overcome evil with good. Above all grant us such faith in the power of love to dispel misunderstanding and create sympathy, that no experience of the narrowness and self-will of man may shake our confidence in the triumph of thy cause, or lessen the sincerity of our own witness to the power of thy Spirit. When the way before us seems closed and we know not what the next step should be, lighten thou our darkness, we beseech thee, and make the path plain before us.

Wait on the Lord. Be of good courage. . . . Wait, I say, on the Lord.—vs. 14.

ALMIGHTY God, our heavenly Father, in whom all contradictions are resolved, all longings satisfied, we thank thee for these moments which thou hast permitted us to spend in thy presence. Help us, as we leave this place and separate to our appointed tasks, to realize that wherever we may go, thou art there awaiting us. We commend to thy fatherly care all our dear ones—kindred and friends, the boys in our clubs, our fellow students who have not shared with us the privilege of our morning prayer. Especially would we bring

before thee in loving remembrance those of our number who are sick. Grant them, if it be thy will, full recovery; and during their period of absence from us, the companionship of thy Spirit. And to us all, O thou all-sufficient God, grant thy gift of courage, that with heads erect and spirits unafraid we may face whatever experience the day my bring. Amen.

VIII

THE HOME OF THE SOUL

Read Psalm XC

[A Period of Silence]

Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.—Psalm XC: 1.

In my Father's house are many mansions.—John XIV: 2.

ALMIGHTY God, who in every age hast been the refuge and shelter of thy people, their protection against danger, their comfort in sorrow, their rest in weariness, the home of the soul; we rejoice that in thy fatherly house there is a place for every one of thy children. As we move out into the unknown experiences of this new day, suffer us not to stray so far from thee that we shall not hear thy voice calling us home.

From everlasting to everlasting thou art God.—Psalm XC: 2.

Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you, . . . but from the beginning it was not so.—Matthew XIX: 8.

ETERNAL God, who in every age hast been the stay of those who put their trust in thee, lifting them up when they were cast down, revealing to them their best selves, holding ever before their eyes the unchanging principles of truth, of justice and of love upon which thou hast established thy universe, reveal us this day unto ourselves. If in the hardness of our hearts we have been content with standards lower than the best, confront us again with thy Christ, that recognizing in him thy will for us, we may live by what we see.

Thou hast set . . . our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.—Psalm XC: 8.

Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.—Matthew V: 28.

O THOU God of truth, who readest the thoughts of our hearts and judgest what thou readest, how shall we stand in thy presence; we who with our lips invoke thy companionship, yet in our hearts cherish desires which we know must separate us from thee. Thou who art too holy to dwell with impurity, too true to tolerate insincerity, how shalt thou bear with us, who, professing to be thy worshippers, deny thee in our secret thoughts?

O satisfy us early with thy mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.—Psalm XC: 14.

Neither do I condemn thee: Go, and sin no more.—John VIII: 11.

O THOU long-suffering Christ, who, though thou wast innocent, yet for our sakes didst suffer the cross which was our desert, forgive us that so often by our betrayal we make thy love of none effect. Lord, we are ashamed and sorry for all wherein we have grieved thee, and are grieving thee today. Satisfy us with thy mercy so freely offered, and from the new faith and hope thou dost impart may we receive strength to sin no more.

So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.—Psalm XC: 12.

I am the way, the truth and the life.—John XIV: 6.

O THOU great teacher of men, with whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, look down upon us, we beseech thee, a company of students who are trying to feel our way a little farther into the mystery of thy world. Open our minds to every new insight; make our spirits sensitive to every fresh impression. Suffer us not to lose the whole in the parts—to sacrifice the distant for the near; but speaking truth in love,

may we grow up in all things unto him whom thou hast given us for our model, the Christ who is the way and the truth and the life.

Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us.—Psalm XC: 17.

The pure in heart . . . shall see God.—Matthew V: 8.

O THOU who dost clothe the earth with verdure, and hast set gladness in the heart of man, God of the morning and of the evening, of the sunshine and of the rain, thou who art ever preparing for us fresh surprises and inviting us to new delights, purify our hearts that we may be fitted to receive thy gifts. Spirit of holiness and truth, whom only spirit can perceive, clarify our vision that we may see thee in thy beauty and rejoice and be glad in thee all our days.

Establish thou the work of our hands.—Psalm XC: 17.

My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.—John V: 17.

BE with us, Lord, we beseech thee, as we go from this place to the tasks thou hast appointed for us. May we work with our might as unto God and not unto man. May we work with our minds as for the future, not simply for the past. May we work with our hearts as free men and not

as hired servants. What we shall do amiss, forgive; what we shall do aright, preserve. Grant unto us this day, if it be thy will, the joy of creation, and the work of our hands establish thou it.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

IX

FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

Read Genesis XVIII: 20-33; Job XLII: 7-10; Philippians I: 3-11

[A Period of Silence]

Behold, now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes.—Genesis XVIII: 27.

ALMIGHTY and ever-living God, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, yet who dost make thine abode with him that is of an humble and contrite spirit, grant unto us, thine unworthy servants, we beseech thee, the spirit of penitence, of humility and of faith as at the opening of this new day we make our common supplications unto thee.

Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.—Luke XXII: 31, 32.

O THOU compassionate Christ, who knowest us altogether; and in our hour of weakness and danger dost make intercession for us; if temptation shall come to us this day, make us conscious of thy sustaining presence; and from our own experience of inward victory, may we learn the art of helping others, when their hour of trial comes.

The Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends.—Job XLII: 10.

O THOU great friend of man, who art ever bearing us upon thy heart of love, planning for each of us more wisely than we can plan for ourselves, hear us, we beseech thee, as we bring before thee in loving intercession the members of our Seminary fellowship who, like ourselves, face the mystery and responsibility of this new day. Thou whose love surpasses the love of man, and whose wisdom is adequate to every experience, whether of crisis or of tragedy, be with each of us, we pray thee, this day, and grant unto us the strength, the guidance, and the inspiration we need.

God is my witness, . . . that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers.—Romans I: 9.

FATHER in heaven, whose encompassing love has set the model for every human home, we commit to thy protecting care the dear ones from

whom for the time we are separated. Though the seas and the years divide us, may we meet daily in thy presence, as we make mention of one another unceasingly in our prayers. All that we would gladly do for them if we could, do thou for them, if it be for their good and according to thy fatherly will. If they are in sorrow, grant them thy comfort; if they are happy, make them happier still; if in sickness, grant them thy healing; if in the active work of life, open to them still wider opportunities of helpfulness; if they are tempted, strengthen them to resist; if they have fallen below their best selves, grant unto them, as unto us, repentance and amendment.

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.—Romans X:1.

GOD of our fathers and of our fathers' fathers, who in the crises of our national history hast raised up leaders who through faith in thee have found courage to dare and strength to persevere, be with us today in our hour of national opportunity and of national responsibility. Forgive us our self-satisfaction and our self-indulgence, our love of money and our love of pleasure, our readiness to condemn others and to excuse ourselves. Grant us candor to discern thy will for us as a nation, and resolution to follow it; and at this

time of the world's need raise up for us, we beseech thee, leaders to go before us into our promised land.

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.—John XVII: 20.

O THOU great head of the church, to whom in every age the hearts of thy disciples have turned for stimulus and guidance, hear us now, we beseech thee, as we pray for thy blessing upon those in every land who confess thy name and own thy right to command. Grant unto them, as unto us, the vision of thyself, the risen and triumphant Savior, who art able to make all things new. May we be one in spirit as we are one in name, even as thou, Lord, art one with the Father, that the world, seeing our unity in faith and hope and love, may believe that the Father hath sent thee.

Now unto him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or even think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages. Amen.

X

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

A MEDITATION FOR A QUIET HOUR

Read Psalm XXIII; John X: 7-16

[A Period of Silence]

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.—
Psalm XXIII: 1.

I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep.
—John X: 14.

UNSLEEPING God, who in every age hast been the shepherd of thy people, their defense in danger, their shelter from the storm, we, thy heedless children, grateful for the care that has been watching over us while we slept, would commit ourselves to thy guidance as we wake to this new day. Giver of every good and perfect gift, we thank thee most of all for the gift of Christ, the Good Shepherd of the flock. Grant that we, sheep of thy pasture, may not wander far from his protecting care; or, if we stray, may be found of him and brought back ere the night fall, to thy fold.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. —Psalm XXIII: 2.

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest.—Matthew XI: 28.

O THOU who hast formed the day for labor and the night for rest, grant us vigor and resolution, we pray thee, as we address ourselves to the tasks thou dost assign. If this day thou shalt lay upon us responsibilities that seem too heavy or test us with burdens that overtax our strength, may we remember him who faced for us yet heavier responsibility and carried for us a yet more crushing load. When the strain seems more than we can bear, may we hear thee saying, My grace is sufficient for thee; and, committing ourselves wholly unto thee, find rest both for body and soul.

He leadeth me beside the still waters.—Psalm XXIII: 2.

Jesus . . . said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.—John IV: 13, 14.

MASTER Workman, who hast called us to be thy fellow workers in thy great task of making men; and who, that we may be furnished for our task, hast put within us yearnings and aspirations that will not let us rest, forgive us that when thou dost invite us to drink of the water of life, we so often turn aside to springs that cannot satisfy. Lead us to the secret source, which alone can quench the thirst thou hast awakened. Be in us a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life.

He restoreth my soul.—Psalm XXIII: 3.
Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake . . . the same shall save it.—Mark VIII: 35.

LIFE-GIVING Spirit, who, to men and women diseased and disconsolate, art ever bringing healing and refreshment, teach us thy secret of youth in age, of life in death. When we would cling to the little that we have of time or money, knowledge or happiness, teach us to spend all freely, that we may receive it back a hundredfold. When we would husband our waning strength, lest there be not enough for our own necessity, reveal to us the need of thy children in distress, that forgetting ourselves in them we may fling our life away, to find it given back to us in life more abundant.

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.—Psalm XXIII: 3.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.—Matthew V: 6.

GOD of love, who art also the God of law, speaking to us in precept and commandment, Thou shalt and thou shalt not; help us to recognize in the duty that so often seems to constrain and limit us, thy discipline fitting us for freedom. May we find in the surrender of our will of the moment, grievous though it seem, a trial which shall afterwards yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Holy Father, who hast given us thy law to be a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, help us so to learn the lessons law was meant to teach, that we may enter as full-grown men and women into the glorious liberty of the sons and daughters of God.

[A Period of Silence]

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.—Psalm XXIII: 4.

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.—John X: 11.

FATHER of mercies and God of all comfort, who art ever leading us, through sorrow as through joy, in the shadow as in the sunshine; who canst make death itself thy messenger opening the door into a larger life; when in thy providence we shall be called to face the great adventure, either in our own person or in the person of those we love, may thy companionship rob the darkness of its terrors and in the valley of the shadow may we feel thy steadying presence. And if the shadow be not physical simply, but moral, may we remember him who, though sinless, yet for our sakes hung on the bitter tree, that through contemplation of his sacrificial love we may find assurance of thine all-sufficient grace.

[A Period of Silence]

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.—Psalm XXIII: 5.

But I say unto you, Love your enemies . . . . and pray for them which despitefully use you.—Matthew V: 44.

GOD of the whirlwind and of the storm, for whom nothing is too hard; who canst make even the wrath of man to praise thee, we thank thee that no obstacle can thwart thy loving purpose, no enemy defeat those who put their trust in thee. When the strife grows bitter and our foes seem to have the mastery, grant us the warrior's courage

and the warrior's joy. Following hard after Christ, the captain of our salvation, may we learn of him a love which hate itself cannot daunt, and forgiving as we have been forgiven, share with him the victor's crown.

Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.—Psalm XXIII: 5.

These things have I spoken unto you, ... that your joy might be full.—John XV: 11.

GOD of the sunshine and of the spring, who dost clothe the earth with beauty and hast put laughter in the heart of man, we praise thee as the author of happiness, we acknowledge thee to be the Lord. When our steps falter, and our hearts are heavy; when all our world grows dull and sad, may we look up to thee, the giver of gladness, that in the brightness of thy presence we may find the renewal and refreshment we need. Thou who art thyself light and life and joy, grant unto us thy children thy gift of happiness, that with thankful hearts we may praise thy holy name.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.—Psalm XXIII: 6.

Lo, I am with you always; even unto the end of the world.—Matthew XXVIII: 20.

ETERNAL God, the inexhaustible fountain of goodness and mercy, who through the changing years remainest ever constant in thy purpose,

bear with us, thy wayward children, who so easily forget thee. Too often, creatures of time and change, we are ensnared by the fancy of the moment, and turn aside to follow pleasures which, like bubbles, vanish at the touch. May we not wait till sorrow comes, or failure, to be reminded of thy presence, but staying our souls on thee, find goodness and mercy following us all the days of our life.

I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.—Psalm XXIII: 6.

In my Father's house are many mansions . . . . I go to prepare a place for you.—John XIV: 2.

AND when, our day over, the night falls, and we hear thy welcoming voice summoning us home, may there be no sadness of farewell, but only thankfulness for past mercies and joy in blessings still to come. Thou who art the God of the living and not of the dead, receive us unto thyself, that in the new room thou hast prepared, we may find ourselves still at home, and in the new work thou dost assign, may continue with ampler powers and riper wisdom the service here begun.

III

THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

"The Communion of the Holy Spirit."

THE HURRYING AGE

Out of the quiet night they came,
The songs that were brave and free,
To the listening ears of the elder seers,
And is there none for me?

Up from the hidden deeps of pain,
Flowed the fancies sweet and true,
Whose reviving streams were the poets' dreams,
And is there none for you?

Are the stellar spaces tenantless,
And the whispering voices dumb?
Has the boundless sea of eternity
Unto its limit come?

Or is it for sound of my restless heart,
In its beating ceaselessly,
That I cannot hear the voices clear,
That fain would speak to me?

And is it for speed of your hasting steps,
As you range the wide world through,
That the waters sweet that would reach your feet,
Still call in vain to you?

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.—Philippians II: 5.

If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.—II Corinthians V: 17.

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.—Colossians III: 1.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance.—Galatians V: 22, 23.

Whether ye eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.—I Corinthians X: 31.

I . . . fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ . . . for his body's sake, which is the Church.—Colossians I: 24.

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all, making request with joy.—Philippians I: 3, 4.

The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.—Romans VIII: 26, 27.

Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them who love him.—I Corinthians II: 9.

Love never faileth.—I Corinthians XIII: 8.

I

POWER FROM ON HIGH

Read Acts I: 1-3, 6-8a; Acts II: 1-8, 12-18, 21

[A Period of Silence]

The former treatise have I made . . . of all that Jesus began both to do and teach.—Acts I: 1.

ALMIGHTY God, who in time past hast revealed thyself unto our fathers, we thank thee that thou art even now speaking unto us, their children. We bless thee for the manifestation of thyself which thou hast made through Jesus Christ, thy Word made flesh; but we thank thee even more for the gift of thy present Spirit, who takes the things of Christ and shows them unto us. Make us responsive to that gracious influence, and the work thou didst begin in the person of our Master, continue, we beseech thee, in us, his disciples.

Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.—Acts I: 8.

O THOU living God for whom nothing is too hard—giver, to those who trust thee, of such good gifts as pass man's understanding—help us

this day to realize who thou art, and what thou art able to do for those who yield themselves completely to thee. Thou who didst promise thy Spirit to the first disciples that they might be fitted to minister in the Master's name to a world in need, impart unto us the power we need to fulfill our high calling.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.
—Acts II: 1.

O GOD who hast made us different from one another, granting to each one of us something which is ours alone; thou who knowest that in us which none other can know and canst do for us that which none other can do, we thank thee for those common gifts which we share with all our fellows; the gifts of food and shelter; of work and rest; of night and day; of sleep and waking. Above all we thank thee for thine unspeakable gift vouchsafed to us in Jesus Christ, thy very self revealed to the better self in each of us. Help us this day, for the moment, to forget the things that separate us, that concentrating upon the things in which we are at one, we may be prepared to receive whatever word thy Spirit shall speak to us.

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues,

as the Spirit gave them utterance.—Acts II: 4.

SPIRIT of wisdom and understanding, who canst open the eyes of the blind and bring to the darkened spirit the light of the divine presence, be our teacher today. We need not ask thee to come to us, for thou art here already—nearer than the air we breathe, closer than the thoughts we think. Make us rather conscious of thy presence and responsive to thy ministry. Thou who art ever bringing to remembrance the things of Christ, interpreting to each new generation the meaning of his life for the life of today, grant us understanding hearts, that we may apprehend what thou art saying. Grant us also persuasive speech that we may be able to repeat what we have heard.

Every man heard them speak in his own language.—Acts II: 6.

FATHER of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who through thy Son hast broken down every barrier that separates thy children, help us to learn from him the language that all men understand. Divided though we be by nationality and race, by past education and present environment, may we yet share the love which can transcend every difference. Teach us so to live that our deeds shall speak louder than our words, so that wherever we go and whatever we say, those whom we meet may hear us

speak in their own language, since it is not we who speak but thy Spirit which speaketh through us.

This is that which was spoken by the prophet. . . . . I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; . . . . and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams, and . . . . whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. —Acts II: 16, 17, 21.

MOST gracious God, who in our best moments dost give us foretastes of those good things which thou hast prepared for those that love thee, increase our faith, we beseech thee, in thy power and in thy will to do for us exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or even think. Thou who in time past hast visited thy people with thy blessing, pour forth thy Spirit upon us in this latter day. May those of us who are young see visions of the better world thou hast in store; may those of us who are old be refreshed with dreams of the endless life to which thou art inviting us. And to all of us, old or young, vouchsafe such a vision of thyself, thy love, thy power, thy wisdom, thy beauty, that forgetting all lesser things we may give ourselves without reserve to thy service, and, trusting thee with the simplicity of children, may receive the end of our faith, even life for evermore. Amen.

II

THE CHURCH WHICH IS HIS BODY

A PRAYER FOR HOLY WEEK

Read Ephesians I: 3, 4; III: 14-19; IV: 1-16; III: 20, 21

[A Period of Silence]

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings . . . . in Christ.—Ephesians I: 3.

O GOD who hast promised to those who love thee such good things as pass man's understanding, make us conscious today of thy presence, thy goodness, and thy power. In this hour—when all over the world men's thoughts are turning in loving remembrance to Jesus Christ our Lord, help us to realize our unity with all who put their trust in thee. All our lives thou hast been leading us, even when we knew it not. The simple things we take for granted—food and shelter, home and friends, work and play, the beauty of the world we see, the interest of the thoughts we think—all are thine, thy gift to us for our welfare and our hap-

piness. But they cannot do for us all thou dost desire unless we realize that they come from thee. Open our eyes, we beseech thee, that we may see thee as thou art. Thou who hast formed us for thyself, reveal thyself unto us this day.

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father . . . . that he would grant you . . . . to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.—Ephesians III: 14, 16.

FATHER of spirits, who hast made us in thine own image, we come to thee this day, conscious of our weakness, that thou mayest make us strong. Free us, we beseech thee, from the tyranny of the little and the near; the haste that is too busy to enjoy, the restlessness that can bring nothing to completion. May we realize that beneath all changes of time and space, all limits of knowledge, all instability of will, the foundation of God standeth sure: The Lord knoweth them that are his. Help us to be still and know that thou art God. Deliver us from the fear that separates us from thee; the fear of the known, the greater fear of the unknown. Strengthen us with power in the inner man, that, renewing our life from thy divine life, we may be free indeed. In this world, so full of unanswered questions and of unforeseen dangers, may we find in thee a safe refuge and a sure defense.

That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.—Ephesians III: 17-19.

O GOD and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who dost bind together in one bundle of life past, present, and future, we praise thee for thine unspeakable love, revealed unto us in Jesus Christ. As we call to mind the story of his life and death, heard so often, appreciated so seldom, may we look past the human figure to the unseen God whom he reveals. Teach us this day some new lesson of that love of God which passeth knowledge. Thou who hast set eternity in our hearts, grant us thy peace.

There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all, and in you all.—Ephesians IV: 4-6.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and didst send thy blessed Son to preach peace to them that are afar off and to them

that are nigh, grant that all thy children everywhere may feel after thee and find thee. Especially we pray for thy blessing upon thy church, the company of faithful people in all lands and in all ages, who have heard the call of Christ and are trying by thy help to serve and follow him. Take away from us all hatred and prejudice, and whatsoever may hinder us from godly union and concord; that as there is but one body and one Spirit and one hope of our calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may be all of one heart and of one soul; united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity; and may with one mind and one mouth glorify thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.—Ephesians IV: 9, 10.

O THOU compassionate Christ, who, though thou wast rich, yet for our sakes didst become poor, that we through thy poverty might become rich; bearer of our burdens, sharer of our infirmities, for us crucified, dead, and buried; hear us now, we beseech thee, as we commend unto thee in loving intercession all souls whom thou hast

made. Wherever there is need this day, be thou present to help. Wherever there is sorrow, be thou there to comfort. Thou who didst come to seek and save that which is lost, grant that all who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death may feel after thee and find thee. Unite again in one unbroken family those who are now strangers to one another. Thou who art the head of the body, draw unto thyself all those for whom thou didst give thy life.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man; unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.—Ephesians IV: 11-13.

O THOU great teacher of men, who art ever speaking to us, even when we hear thee not, grant us today the receptive spirit that we may be able to receive what thou art ready to impart. Thou who in every age hast been revealing thyself to thy church through prophets and sages, apostles and saints, art even now speaking to us. As we thankfully receive that special word which is meant for

us alone, may we be no less grateful for those other words thou art speaking to other children of thine. May each new experience of thee bring us closer to our fellows, that growing from day to day in thy knowledge and thy love, we may enter ever more completely into the communion of saints.

I . . . beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.—Ephesians IV: 1-3.

ABOVE all, O Father, make us faithful to the light we have. Thou dost invite us to be thy ministers to men in need. Help us to walk worthily of the calling wherewith we are called. May we be humble, as our Master was humble, compassionate as he was compassionate, loving as he was loving, diligent as he was diligent. As we go out from this hour of privilege to take up our wonted duty, go thou with us; that through thy constant companionship, ever more vividly realized, we may be enabled to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

III

SEEING THINGS IN PROPORTION

Read I Corinthians I: 10-17; III: 1-9; 21-23

[A Period of Silence]

I beseech you, brethren, by . . . our Lord Jesus Christ . . . that there be no divisions among you.—I Corinthians I: 10.

ALMIGHTY God, who through thy Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, hast broken down the middle wall of partition between nations and races, grant unto us, men and women of many countries and of many creeds, thy spirit of unity. Help us this day to rise above our divisions of taste and of inclination, of prejudice and of self-will, and to see ourselves, as thou seest us, children of a common Father, sinners needing a common forgiveness, sorrowing hearts needing a common comfort, workers engaged upon a common task, recruits summoned to a common service.

Now this I say, that every one of you saith: I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.—I Corinthians I: 12.

FORGIVE us, Lord, our offences of mind and heart and will; our pride of opinion and unwillingness to learn; that we have so often made our own preference, our standard for judging others, and closed our ears to the new word thou art speaking to us through them. Deliver us from all provincialism and sectarianism of thought or feeling. Open our minds to truth wherever found, and our hearts to goodness by whomsoever illustrated. May we never substitute the disciple for the Master, or make our individual apprehension of the world's Christ our excuse for refusing fellowship with those for whom he gave his life.

Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you?—I Corinthians I: 13.

O LORD and Master of us all, who, though thou wast rich, yet for our sakes didst become poor, that we through thy poverty might be made rich, reveal thyself unto us this day as the helper and leader we need. Thou who on Calvary didst uncover the heart of God, speak to us thy word of forgiveness and peace. Bind us by the cords of thy constraining love to all thy children everywhere, who, hungering and thirsting, as we hunger and thirst, have found in thee the bread from heaven and the water of life.

Who, then, is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed. . . . Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one.—I Corinthians III: 5, 8.

WE thank thee, Lord of heaven and earth, for all thy servants, living and dead, through whom thy healing word has come to us; for all who have borne witness by word and life to Christ's power to enlighten and to renew—for Abraham and Moses and Isaiah; for Paul and Apollos and Peter; for Augustine and Francis and Aquinas; for Luther and Calvin and Wesley; for all the innumerable company, known to us and unknown, who have fought the good fight and run the straight race. Especially we thank thee for those near and dear to us—fathers and mothers, teachers and friends—through whom thou hast spoken to us in more intimate ways; in whose lives, lived in our presence day by day, we have seen reflected the radiance of thy love.

Therefore, let no man glory in man; for all things are yours; whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or things present or things to come.—I Corinthians III: 21, 22.

GRACIOUS God, who, possessing all things, art ever sharing what thou hast with those who lack; suffer us not, children whom thou dost

invite to be partakers of thy riches, to live longer in poverty and limitation. Thou who art everywhere, and Master everywhere, reveal unto us thy presence, thy power and thy love. In nature, in the lives of men, in sorrow and in joy, in life and in death, in the fleeting present and in the unknown future, help us to perceive thine overruling hand outstretched to us. May we hear thee saying to us this day, All things are yours.

And ye are Christ's: and Christ is God's.—I Corinthians III: 23.

MAY we hear thy word, and understand and obey—that word, not spoken only but lived by him who loved us and gave himself for us: Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's, the same shall save it. Surrendered to Christ, may we through that surrender become joint heirs with Christ of all the universe of God.

In his name we ask it. Amen.

IV

THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

Read Galatians V: 13-26; VI: 7-9

[A Period of Silence]

For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.—Galatians V: 13.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast formed us for thyself, that we may share thy divine and satisfying life, reveal thyself to us this morning, as we are met in thy presence, a little company of thy children, whom thou dost invite to share thy gift of freedom. Help us to use this great gift in a manner worthy of the giver, not making our liberty an excuse for self-indulgence, but in the school of love learning how to become helpers of one another.

The fruit of the Spirit is love.—Galatians V: 22.

Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth

not, knoweth not God; for God is love.—I John IV: 7, 8.

O THOU who didst not spare thine only begotten Son, but didst give him freely for us all, and dost invite us to follow in thy footsteps, grant us thy gift of love.

The fruit of the Spirit is joy.—Galatians V: 22.

Thou wilt show me the path of life. In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.—Psalm XVI: 11.

O THOU who delightest in thy works; who dost clothe the earth with beauty, and givest radiance to the sun; Spirit of gladness in the heart of man, grant us thy gift of joy.

The fruit of the Spirit is peace.—Galatians V: 22.

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.—John XIV: 27.

O THOU gracious God, who dost grant unto those who trust and follow Christ the peace that passeth understanding, grant us thy gift of peace.

The fruit of the Spirit is long-suffering.—Galatians V: 22.

Love suffereth long and is kind. Love . . . beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth.—I Corinthians XIII: 4, 7, 8.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful God, who dost bear our sins and carry our infirmities, and art waiting even now for the open door through which thy grace may enter in; grant us thy gift of patience.

The fruit of the Spirit is kindness.—Galatians V: 22.

The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide; neither will he keep his anger forever . . . Wherefore . . . be ye kind, one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you.—Psalm CIII: 8, 9; Ephesians IV: 25, 32.

O THOU hearer and answerer of prayer, who art ever more ready to give than we to ask, and didst say to us by the lips of thy Son our Lord, It is more blessed to give than to receive, soften our hard hearts, we beseech thee, and grant us thy gift of kindness.

The fruit of the Spirit is goodness.—Galatians V: 22.

And behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good, but one, that is God.—Matthew XIX: 16, 17.

O THOU righteous God, who through thy Spirit dost convict us of sin, forgive us, we beseech thee, for all that we have done amiss in deed, in word, and in our secret thoughts; and grant us, if it be thy will, thy gift of goodness.

The fruit of the Spirit is faithfulness.—Galatians V: 22.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness . . . It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful . . . If we are faithless, he abideth faithful. —I John 1: 9; I Corinthians IV: 2; II Timothy II: 13.

ETERNAL God, whose word abideth forever and whose promise changeth not; thou who hast made us, weak and changeful mortals, stewards of the mystery of thy grace, grant us thy gift of fidelity.

The fruit of the Spirit is meekness.—Galatians V: 23.

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted . . . Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.—Galatians VI: 1; Matthew V: 5.

FATHER in heaven, who through Christ our Master hast given us an example of lowly service, suffer us not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think. Thou who dost bid us to be perfect, even as thou art perfect, grant us thy gift of meekness.

The fruit of the Spirit is temperance.—Galatians V: 23.

I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God; . . . and be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.—Romans XII: 1, 2.

CAPTAIN of our salvation, who, tempted like as we are, didst fight the good fight of faith, be thou our helper in our struggle for mastery this day. When temptation besets us without or within, grant us thy gift of self-control.

Let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.—Galatians VI: 9.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee, and dost promise that when two or three are gathered together in thy name, thou wilt grant their request; fulfil now the desires and petitions of thy servants as may be most expedient for us; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth and in the world to come, life everlasting. Amen.

V

THE DEEP THINGS OF GOD

Read I Corinthians I: 18, 22-25; II: 1-10

[A Period of Silence]

Christ crucified, . . . unto them which are called, . . . the power of God and the wisdom of God.—I Corinthians I: 23, 24.

ALMIGHTY God, our heavenly Father, searcher of the hearts of men, for whom nothing is too great and nothing too small, we, thy weak and erring children, draw near to thee this morning for the guidance and renewal we need for the day's task. Open our eyes, we beseech thee, that we may understand thy purpose for us. Strengthen our wills that we may be able to perform it. Interpret to us the mystery of the cross, that we may be able to interpret it to others. Take away the wilfulness which so often makes it a stumbling block. Purge us of the pride which so often finds it foolishness. May it become to us as to thine apostle wisdom and power.

We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery.—I Corinthians II: 7.

ETERNAL Father, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain; thou who dost hide thyself from the wise and prudent that thou mayest reveal thyself unto babes, grant unto us this day the spirit of children with their father. There is so much in life that we cannot understand, so much that is hard to bear. We come into thy presence, a company of students trying to push our way a little further through the shadows. We are compassed about with mystery; the mystery of life and the mystery of death; the mystery of love and the mystery of hate; the mystery of joy and the mystery of sorrow; the mystery of sin and the mystery of the cross. O thou who art thyself the mystery of mysteries, part the clouds that hide thy face and reveal thyself unto us this day.

For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified. —I Corinthians II: 2.

O THOU God of love, who art ever seeking to save that which is lost, and who, through Jesus Christ, dost invite us to share thy ministry of reconciliation, look down upon us, we beseech thee, this company of friends and fellow students, so soon to separate for the summer rest. Be with each one of us in the unknown experiences which lie before us. Go with those of us whose work here is finished, and fit us for the new work and larger

responsibilities we are taking up. Return with those who shall return, that we may bring with us treasures of insight and sympathy which we have received from thee. Whether we go or whether we return, keep us ever an unbroken company, one in faith in thee, one in love for man. May we determine to know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified, that knowing him, we may know thee, from whom he came forth, and the men for whom he came.

And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.—I Corinthians II: 4.

HEAR us now, O Father, as we bring before thee in loving intercession all those children of thine, known to us or unknown, whom thou art seeking to win for thyself. Thou who didst choose our humanity to be the channel of thy self-revelation, make us reverent of personality wherever it is found. Increase our faith in the better man in men. Vouchsafe to us such experience of thy power to transform and to renew that nothing shall seem too hard for thee. When our human powers fail, help us to draw on thy divine reserve. May we not rely on the persuasive words of our own wisdom, but on the power of thy creative Spirit.

Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect; yet not the wisdom of this world.—I Corinthians II: 6.

ABOVE all, O compassionate one, grant us thy gift of wisdom. May we see men, as thou seest them, with their unspoken longings, their unsuspected aspirations, the secret shame that masquerades as pride, the unconfessed fear that cloaks itself with bravado. Make us patient as thou art patient; content to wait the moment, however long delayed, when the closed door shall open and love may enter in. Thou who dost lay upon us a task too great for man, impart unto us thy wisdom.

Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.—I Corinthians II: 9.

GRACIOUS God, who art ever more ready to give than we to receive, and hast prepared for those who love thee such good gifts as pass man's understanding, fulfil now the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for us. Help us to live this day, as befits the children of the eternal, looking ever to thee for the light and strength we need. Thou who art the source of all good and the satisfaction of all desire, grant us thy peace. Amen.

VI

HOW TO LIVE IN HEAVEN WHILE STILL ON EARTH

Read Colossians II: 13, 14, 16, 17, 20-23; III: 1-17

[A Period of Silence]

Set your affection on things above; not on things on the earth.—Colossians III: 2.

GRACIOUS God, who through thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord, hast set us free from the precepts and commandments of men, and dost open to us the whole world of knowledge and experience from which to choose what we shall make our own, teach us how to use thy gift of choice, aright. Thou who dost lend to each creature which thou hast made something of thyself which outlasts time and change, help us to learn from the things of sense the lessons they were meant to teach, that, following eagerly after the best, we may live here and now as seeing him who is invisible.

(Put away) uncleanness.—Colossians III: 5.

O GOD who hast given us the body to be the home of the spirit, and canst make of every sense the avenue by which to enter in and dwell

with us, fill us so completely with thyself that we shall have no room for anything that is debasing or unclean. Spirit of holiness, who by thine indwelling canst make our mortal body a temple of the living God, help us this day to purify thy house, that it may become an habitation worthy of the Most High.

(Put away) malice.—Colossians III: 5.

FATHER of Spirits, who art ever speaking to us through the lips of our brother men; by their failures appealing to our compassion, by their triumphs stimulating us to emulation, deliver us, we beseech thee, from envy, malice, and all uncharitableness. Spirit of unity who hast made us for one another, that what one lacks, the other may supply, teach us to see the best in every man we meet, and to rejoice in it as thy good gift to us.

(Put away) covetousness, which is idolatry.—Colossians III: 5.

GOD of the sun and of the sea, of the mountain and of the plain, who hast stored the hills with iron and coal and dost visit the earth with seedtime and harvest, that thy children may have food and warmth and shelter; forgive us that so often we seek to appropriate to our own use the goods thou hast provided for all thy children. Thou who hast formed us for thyself, help us to

realize that no gift of thine is truly possessed until it is shared, and through love of men may we rise to love of God.

Put on . . . humility.—Colossians III: 12.

O THOU who art from everlasting to everlasting, the source of all life, the stimulus of all desire, for whom we were made and without whom we must ever remain restless and incomplete, grant us today, we beseech thee, the humility that befits the children of the eternal. Spirit of purity and truth, who art able to do for us more than we can ask or even think, make us conscious of thy presence, we beseech thee. We would open to thee the door of our heart; enter in and be our guest this day.

Put on love, which is the bond of perfectness. —Colossians III: 14.

ALL-SEEING God, who in the wisdom of thy love dost see in us, thine erring and imperfect children, limitless possibilities of usefulness and happiness, help us to look upon others with the same understanding sympathy wherewith thou dost regard us. Amid all that is divisive and repellent, barriers of temperament and of habit, of misunderstanding and of prejudice, may we perceive the capacities of goodness and of beauty which thou hast planted in every human life; that, seeing as

thou seest, we may love as thou lovest and trust as thou dost trust.

Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, ... and be ye thankful.—Colossians III: 15.

O THOU long-suffering God, who dost bear upon thy heart the sorrow and sin of the world, and dost invite us to share the cost and the reward of thy ministry of love, grant us thy peace —the peace of Christ which the world can neither give nor take away. Go with us now as we separate to our several tasks, and whatever the day may bring, of success or failure, of sorrow or joy, may we be conscious that thou art sharing our experience, and be thankful. Amen.

VII

PAUL'S WAY OF KEEPING YOUNG

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.—Ecclesiastes XII: 1.

Read Ecclesiastes XII: 1-7; II Corinthians IV: 15-18; V: 11-19

[A Period of Silence]

A New Beginning

The days of our years are three score years and ten, and if, by reason of strength, they be four score years; yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.—Psalm XC: 10.

If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. —II Corinthians V: 17.

O THOU God of life, who art ever fashioning shapes of wonder and beauty, inexhaustible fountain of joy to those who stay their hearts upon thee, we, thy children, draw near to thee at the beginning of this new day for the renewal thou alone canst provide. For the refreshment that has come to us in sleep, we thank thee. But more we

thank thee for the tasks that summon, now that day is come. For youth we thank thee, with its open door and sense of boundless possibilities. But most of all we thank thee that when the years bring added strain, thou hast a spring at which we can renew our youth, so that every day shall be a new beginning and every year a portal ushering us into a larger life.

A New Friendship

For the love of Christ constraineth us.—II Corinthians V: 14.

Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known to you.—John XV: 15.

O GOD, who hast made us for one another, we thank thee for thy gift of friendship—for the enrichment of life that comes to us through the exchange of experience, as heart opens to heart and mind holds converse with mind. But most of all, we thank thee for Jesus Christ, the friend of friends, through whom thou art ever opening to us new vistas and inviting us to fresh experience. Yielding ourselves in willing surrender to the constraint of his love, may we find in fellowship with him a means of entrance into other hearts.

A New Purpose

He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again.—II Corinthians V: 15.

Forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.—Philippians III: 13b, 14.

ALL-SEEING Father, who in thy wisdom canst gather into an ordered whole the separate happenings of lives, in themselves conflicting and incomplete, we, thy human children, would invoke thy guidance at the beginning of this new day. Take our discordant desires, we beseech thee, and harmonize them with thy dominant purpose. Open our eyes to the larger whole of which we are a part. Fix them upon the cross and him who hung thereon, that dying with Christ to our baser selves and rising again into newness of life, we may henceforth live not for ourselves, but for him who loved us and gave himself for us.

A New Interest

Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.—II Corinthians V: 17.

Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or what-

soever ye do, do all to the glory of God.—I Corinthians X: 31.

GOD of the world without and of the world within, for whom nothing is too great and nothing too small, we rejoice that into whatever part of thy wonderful world our steps may wander, we shall find thee there. We thank thee for those rare moments of insight when at some crisis of our life we have felt thy presence uplifting or constraining. Help us to remember that there is no task so common, no drudgery so monotonous, but if our eyes be open we may find thee sharing it with us. Open our eyes to see thee here and now; go with us in the next step and the next. Glorify each least thing we do with the dignity of thy companionship; whether we eat or drink, work or play, rejoice or suffer, whatsoever we do, may we do all to thy glory.

A New Sense of Ownership

All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ.—II Corinthians V: 18.

All (things) are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.—I Corinthians III: 21, 23.

LORD of all being, Maker and Master of the world and all that dwell therein, we thank thee that in thy treasure house there is ample store

for the need of every child of thine. Forgive us that in our desire to possess and to enjoy, we so often seek to appropriate to our own use goods which thou hast designed for all thy children. Teach us that as no man liveth to himself, so no man owneth by himself. May we hold all that we have as a trust to be used for the furtherance of thy Kingdom. If in thy providence thou shalt call us to give it back, may we do so without repining, knowing that possessing thee, we possess all things, and that in all thy universe there is nothing, which, rightly approached, may not be ours to use and to enjoy.

A New Sense of Partnership

God . . . hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.—II Corinthians V: 18.

For we are laborers together with God.—I Corinthians III: 9.

O LORD, our Lord, how manifold are thy works. In wisdom hast thou made them all —the starry heavens with their sparkling lights, the fruitful earth with its ample store, the heart of man with its joys and sorrows, its hopes and fears. Who are we, Lord, creatures of time and change, that watching thee at thy creative task, we should hear thee saying unto us, Come, fellow worker, share with me the joy of making my world? Lord, we are not worthy of this gift of gifts, this

trust of trusts, but we would be made worthy. Fashion us again after thy heart's desire, that remade by thee we may become partners with thee in thy creative work.

A New Dynamic

For (this) cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.—II Corinthians IV: 16.

Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.—Isaiah XL: 30, 31.

"LORD, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in thy presence will prevail to make:
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take.
What parched grounds revive, as with a shower!
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower:
We rise, and all, the distant and the near,
Stands forth in sunny outline brave and clear.
We kneel, how weak: we rise how full of power!

Why therefore should we do ourselves this wrong
Or others, that we are not always strong;

That we are ever overborne with care,
That we should ever weak and heartless be,
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy and strength and courage are with thee."
—Trench: Sonnet on Prayer.

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! . . . For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things. To whom be glory for ever. Amen.—Romans XI: 33, 36.

VIII

THE MIND OF CHRIST

Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.—II Corinthians X: 5. X: 5.

Read Philippians II: 5-11; IV: 1, 4-8

[A Period of Silence]

Thinking With Christ

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.—Philippians II: 5.

O GOD, who hast made us in thine own image, and given us the gift of thought that we may be able to understand the meaning of thy handiwork and to use it aright, be with us now, we beseech thee, as with reverent hearts and receptive spirits we draw near to thee to receive the illumination we need. We thank thee for every word thou hast spoken to us and art speaking today—in nature, in history, in the Bible, through thy church, in the familiar experiences of every day. But most of all, we thank thee for Jesus Christ, thy word made flesh, through whom thou hast translated all thine other words into the language of life, and

art drawing us to thyself by the contagion of love. Help us to understand what we see in him; interpret to us what we feel concerning him. Be our teacher as with expectant faith we seek to enter into the mind of Christ.

About Himself

Who, being in the form of God, thought it not a prize to be on an equality with God; but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant.—Philippians II: 6, 7.

SUFFER us not to be deceived, Lord, by the lowly guise in which thy Christ comes to us; but recognizing in him thy messenger, may we open mind and heart alike to his approach. Help us to think of him as he thinks of himself—as the bringer of thy salvation and the interpreter of thy love. Yielding ourselves to him in docility and faith, may we find in him the way we seek, the truth we need, the life we crave.

About Ourselves

Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself.—Philippians II: 8.

HELP us to think of ourselves, Lord, as Christ thinks of us—as comrades invited to share with him his ministry of love. Grant us humility to learn thy will, patience to submit to thy discipline, resolution to withstand thine adversaries,

fortitude to bear thy cross. May no task be so lowly but we shall be quick to stoop to it at thy bidding; no responsibility so exacting but we shall receive it with joy at thy hand. Following our Master step by step—in the darkness as in the light—may we find thy word fulfilled in us, My strength is made perfect in weakness.

About Failure

(He) became obedient to death, even the death of the cross.—Philippians II: 8.

MAY we think of suffering as he would have us think of it—as a discipline sent us by our Father for our good. May we think of death as he would have us think of it—as the gateway by which we may enter into life more abundant. When our best efforts fail and our task seems unfulfilled, may we remember him who for our sakes endured reproach more bitter and failure more heartbreaking. May we think of the cross as he would have us think of it—as the measure of God's love for needy and sinful men.

About Success

Wherefore also God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.—Philippians II: 9, 10, 11.

ABOVE all, O Lord, help us to measure success by the standard of our Master. When all men speak well of us, may we be on our guard, lest they praise us for what thou dost disapprove. May we not be content with any transient success, but coveting earnestly the best, find reward where Christ found it—in the victory of the cause for which he gave his all, the triumph of that kingdom from which selfishness shall be forever banished and where love shall be supreme.

About Work

Wherefore, my beloved, . . . work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.—Philippians II: 12, 13.

GO with us now, we beseech thee, to our several tasks. May we do each thing that we do with our might, as unto the Lord and not unto men. When we are perplexed, lighten our darkness; when we are weak, grant us thy strength; when we are fearful, lend us thy courage. Work thou within us both to will and to do of thy good pleasure, and may thy blessing crown the work thou hast thyself begun.

About Leisure

Finally, my brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things.—Philippians IV: 8.

NOT in our hours of labor only, Lord, but in our hours of leisure grant us thy companionship. May every moment be filled with thoughts of things lovely and of good report. May nothing base or petty find lodgment in the mind thou hast chosen for thy habitation; but fixing our eyes upon our Master, may we be changed more and more into his image, till by thy grace every thought we think shall be brought into willing conformity to the mind of Christ.

The peace of God which passeth all understanding keep your hearts and minds. Through Jesus Christ. Amen.

IX

THE MORE EXCELLENT WAY

Read I Corinthians XII: 31; XIII; I John IV: 7-12, 18-21

[A Period of Silence]

A . . . more excellent way show I unto you.—I Corinthians XII: 31.

FATHER of lights, of whose radiance our best insights are but broken reflections, look down upon us, we beseech thee, a company of thy children, separated from one another by barriers of ignorance and of misunderstanding, which, without thy help, we cannot overpass. Thou, O Lord, knowest us altogether—our secret thoughts, our unconfessed desires, each hidden shame, each unrealized aspiration. Interpret us to one another. Grant us thy love—the love that hopes all things and believes all things; the love that suffers long and is kind; the love that seeks not its own: that is not easily provoked; the love that rejoices not in iniquity but rejoices in the truth; the love that can overcome all obstacles and break down all barriers, because it understands.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not love, I am become as sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.—I Corinthians XIII: 1.

WE thank thee, Lord, for thy gift of speech; that thou hast not left us solitary in thy world, shut up each one in the prison of his own thoughts, but hast given us a tongue to speak the word that is in our hearts. We thank thee for all the voices that have spoken to us in the past—voices of poets and of prophets, of scholars and of seers—interpreting thy purposes and inviting us to thy service. Grant us thy gift of utterance. Speak through us, Lord, thy word of healing and of power; but above all, Lord, grant us thy love, without which all that we say will be but as sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I can move mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.—I Corinthians XIII: 2.

WE thank thee, Lord, for thy gift of knowledge; that in this world so full of wonderful things to see and to enjoy, thou hast not left us blind. We thank thee for the many doors by which we may enter into the meaning of thy world:

the door of science, with its revelation of law; the door of experience, which brings the distant near; above all, the door of faith, with its assurance of new worlds still undiscovered, new beauties still undisclosed. Help us to remember that all our knowledge is nothing worth if we know not love; that faith itself is impotent to save if it be not faith that works by love.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing.—I Corinthians XIII: 3.

WE thank thee, Lord, for thy gift of action; that when words fail us, we have another language, even the language of the deed. For all thy saints, we thank thee, who have given their goods to feed the poor; for all Christ's martyrs, who have given their bodies to be burned, we bless thy holy name. Grant unto us like courage and like consecration. Help us not only to say, Lord, Lord, but to do thy will. But suffer us never to forget that all that we do will profit us nothing if it be not done at love's bidding, and all that we surrender will be nothing worth if it be not given up for love's sake.

And now abideth faith, hope, love; these three. But the greatest of these is love.

Love never faileth.—I Corinthians XIII: 13, 8.

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God.—I John IV: 7.

O THOU God of love, who didst not spare thine only begotten Son, but didst give him up for our sakes, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life; we thank thee most of all that the life to which thou dost invite us is the life of love. Thou who hast made us for thyself, make us like thyself. Teach us thy secret, that loving thee, who hast first loved us, we may learn to love one another. Amen.

Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, makes us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. —Hebrews XIII: 20, 21.

X

MORE THAN CONQUERORS

A THANKSGIVING AT THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR

Read Romans I: 1, 7-12; VIII: 28, 31, 32, 35-39; Philippians III: 13-16

[A Period of Silence]

ALMIGHTY God, who through various experiences of joy and sorrow hast brought us safely to the beginning of this new year, we thank thee for the love and care which have been our constant companions during the year that has closed. As we pause for a moment to look back, before we turn to meet the new experiences that await us, we would acknowledge with grateful hearts the manifold blessings which we have received at thy hands. Giver of every good and perfect gift, we praise thy holy name for the gifts thou hast given us.

For every lesson learned of the meaning of life; of thy purpose for us and for thy world;

WE THANK THEE.

For every experience that has brought us a fresh

realization of thy presence and reminded us that thou hast not left us alone in the world;

WE THANK THEE.

For the sense of dependence that has come with failure, and the spirit of penitence that has come after sin; for the heart that is restless till it find its rest in thee;

WE THANK THEE.

For things denied on which we had set our hearts; for things granted for which we were not wise enough to ask;

WE THANK THEE.

For the familiar contacts of home and friends; for the gift of human fellowship, revealing to us capacities in others and in ourselves of which we had else been ignorant; making it possible for us to understand, as we could not otherwise have done, thy fellowship with us;

WE THANK THEE.

For the privilege of study; for all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge stored up for us in the past, waiting to be kindled by thy Spirit into a torch lighting our steps through the present into the future;

WE THANK THEE.

For the kindly earth, that nourishes us; for sun and moon and stars; for the harmony of form and colour that delights us; for the infinite reaches of space that lift our thoughts to thee;

WE THANK THEE.

For day and night; for sleep and waking; for the necessity of work and the capacity for play;

WE THANK THEE.

For the Bible, that tells us the story of thy loving purpose; for the church that witnesses to thy continuing presence; for the Spirit that is even now speaking in our hearts;

WE THANK THEE.

For our country, with its inheritance of love of liberty and respect for law—with its unexampled opportunity for self-discipline for world service;

WE THANK THEE.

For the growing spirit of good-will among men of many nations; for the deepening consciousness of the brotherhood of man; for the increasing number of those, in every land, who are determined by God's help to put an end to war; for the steps already taken, at Stockholm and at Geneva, to create organs of international understanding in church and state;

WE THANK THEE.

For whatever private and personal experiences the year has brought, that are too intimate to be shared with any other, through which thou hast taught us lessons we needed to learn;

WE THANK THEE.

[A Period of Silence]

ABOVE all, we thank thee for the revelation of thy love made known to us through Jesus Christ—that love from which nothing can separate us, neither life nor death, nor tribulation nor anguish, nor things present, nor things to come; that love by which we are made more than conquerors over every danger and every fear.

O God, help us to believe in this love and to trust it utterly, so that we may be made strong and free and glad. As we move forward into the New Year, be thou still our companion and guide. Forgetting the things that are behind, may we press on to the things that are before. May we count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Now unto him that is able to keep us from falling and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy; to the only wise God, our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

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